

# **OUR BEGINNING IN WISDOM**

**Muhammad al-Ghazzālī**

Translated from the Arabic by  
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## FOREWORD

The Near Eastern Translation Program as an operation of the American Council of Learned Societies effected through its Committee on Near Eastern Studies, was initiated in 1950 with the aid of a subsidy from The Rockefeller Foundation. The aim of the program is the translation into English of significant works in all the important Near Eastern languages, in the fields of the humanities and of the social sciences, to provide an insight into local life and thought.

In the difficult problem of choosing books for translation, the Committee has had the counsel and cooperation of scholars throughout the United States and Canada, as well as in Europe and the Near East generally. It is thought that the selections will be of increasing use to readers interested in world affairs, and will also serve as collateral reading material for courses in our colleges and universities.

The volumes translated are of various recent dates and have been restricted by the fundamental aim of the program--the discovery and selection of the best in contemporary thought written by the various peoples of this region for themselves. Only in this way, it is believed, can American readers be made aware of the concepts and ideologies by which the thinking and attitudes of the various peoples of the Near East are being molded. The translations are unabridged English versions of the original text, made to represent the closest approximation in the English language of what the author said to his own readers.

It should, of course, be clearly understood that the views expressed in the works translated are the opinions of the writers and not of the American Council of Learned Societies or the Committee on Near Eastern Studies. Both the Council and the Committee, however, wish to express their appreciation for the generous service of the various authors who have willingly facilitated translation and publication of their work in this way.

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In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

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## INTRODUCTION

Islam is the word of God sent to His Prophet that he might communicate it to mankind. It was designed to serve as a basis upon which a just, righteous, and charitable state could be founded and as a power by which the pillars of injustice, tyranny, and evil could be destroyed. It is not suprarational; it does not lead the reason astray; nor does it run counter to common sense.

It is perfectly possible for mankind to realize the highest ideals and greatest aims of Islam by the light of revelation and the guidance of reason.

The advocates of the Islamic idea came to this realization when they saw Western civilization crumbling and realized that it had failed to give man security and happiness. They then rose to demand that those in power observe the teachings of Islam and spread the conviction that in these teachings alone lies the road to salvation and well-being.

As the enthusiasm for this Islamic idea continued to grow and the ranks of its army increased, a shrill piercing voice struck our ears. Its aim was to spread doubt and disbelief in the capacity of Islam for comprehensive reform and to prevent once and for all its adoption as a general program by a nation anxious to achieve glory and assume its due position among the other nations.

"From Here We Start"\* is a book the purpose of which was neither the drawing up of a healthy program nor the depiction of an ideal. Rather, it has provided the enemies of Islam with weapons and ammunition with which to retard the advance of any reform program.

How happy the enemies were at the publication of this book and how ardent was their acclaim! The author, they thought,

is an Azharite 'ālim [scholar]; he openly seeks to separate Islam from the actual life of the people; moreover, he asserts that he wrote some chapters of his book to oppose the campaign of Islam and its supporters from the standpoint of thought and principle. What proof can be more clear that he is the enemy of Islam and its believers than such a claim? In the face of such an assault, it is imperative that some great man of Islam rise to the challenge, that he put things in their proper place, expose the falseness of "From Here We Start", and present Islam pure once more as it was presented by the Prophet and as it was recorded in the Koran.

Such has been the task of His Eminence Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazzālī who now presents "Our Beginning in Wisdom" as a refutation of the argument of "From Here We Start", dissolving the doubts to which it gave rise and exposing its many and grave errors. "Our Beginning in Wisdom" has the merit of presenting Islam clearly--as the religion that saves civilization and is the guardian of its noble pillars. "Wherefore be thou orthodox, and set thy face towards the true religion, the institution of God, to which He hath created mankind disposed: There is no change in what God hath created. This is the right religion; but the greater part of men know it not."\*

How right was the author of this book in his assertion that the ties of religion and state are indissoluble. Every attempt to separate them is a violation of Islam as a belief and a doctrine. The decisive arguments and proofs therefor are to be found in the chapter entitled "Islamic, Not National Rule".

The author of "From Here We Start" did Islam and its genuine 'ulama [scholars] an injustice when he confounded the former with priesthood and other false religions, and the latter with the false priests and ministers of Brahma, Buddha, and their like. Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazzālī has exposed this flagrant confusion and rightly distinguished between the true men of Islam and its false pretenders and enemies.

In the chapter entitled "Woman and Society", the author has discussed the Islamic doctrine that granted women their

\*Khālid Muhammad Khālid, "Min Hunā Nabda' ", Cairo, 1950.

\*All quotations from the Koran are from George Sale's translation. [Ed. note]

complete rights, defined their true role in life, and protected them against destructive currents and base passions. He then criticized those deluded fools who, spellbound by the example of Europe, have allowed themselves to violate every rule of good breeding and virtue and have thereby paved the way for decadence.

Finally, the author's discussion of Islam and socialism has been a primary consideration in this as well as many other works. He has previously published three studies on this subject: "al-Islām wa al-Awḍā' al-Iqtisādiyyah" [Islam and the Economic Situation]; "al-Islām wa al-Manāhij al-Ishtirākiyah" [Islam and the Socialist Programs]; "al-Islām al-Muftara 'Alayhi Bayn al-Shayū'niyyin wa al-Rā'smāliyyin" [Islam between Its Enemies, Communism and Capitalism]--all of which, together with many additional articles, are considered the prime source material for all later publications on the subject.

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It is the will of God that no attack upon His religion shall pass without challenge. In this as in every other case, God has appointed a person to tear the enemy to pieces and crush his forces. "And wherever they summon an argument, I shall bring to thee the light and the best understanding."

We pray that God may reward him for his devoted service to Islam and assist him in his search for genuine knowledge and his pursuit of noble deeds.

Sāliḥ 'Ishmāwī

Muharram, 1370 A.H.

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Religious belief is a natural characteristic of the inhabitants of this [the Nile] valley. It has been an integral part of their character since the dawn of history.

Under the ancient Pharaohs, religious emotion was the distinguishing feature of Egyptian civilization. Life after death was a constant preoccupation, and Egypt's preparations for the hereafter have never been surpassed or even paralleled. The ancient Egyptian prepared himself for punishment or reward in the grave and considered this life as a bridge to a long eternity. In those days, the neighbors of Egypt were either bound to their material pursuits or occupied with diverse philosophical speculations.

When Christianity made its appearance in history, Romans as well as Egyptians adopted it. But soon the differences in religious character stood out: on one hand, there was a truly religious nature, sincere and candid in its faith, and on the other, a nature unsympathetic to religion and ready to abuse it where it was materially profitable to do so. Thus Egypt gave the new religion many a martyr and stood up against the irreligious, pagan Romans.

To the present day the Egyptian Copts have been far more faithful to their Christianity, far more consistently observant of their ritual and religious duties than the Christians of Europe. In fact, the lay Copt observes his religious duties in a way unparalleled even by the Western priest.

After Christianity came Islam. The champions of the new faith spread far and wide, presenting its principles and breaking the opposition of the decrepit superstitions that had enslaved mankind for centuries. After considering the new doctrine and investigating its principles, the nations were convinced. They discarded what they had inherited to adopt what they had learned.

The Egyptians were among the first converts. They willingly joined the religion of God in great numbers, in full sincerity and with complete conviction. They were accustomed to accept the right and the true, and they were perfectly

prepared to sacrifice body and soul for the sake of the faith.

Centuries passed, during which Egypt remained true to the faith and fulfilled all expectations. The earth trembled under the footsteps of the Tatars, who uprooted civilization everywhere, even in the most flourishing capitals and the most thriving regions of the world. This demented torrent reached as far as Egypt and sought to destroy Islam's most impregnable stronghold. But God had willed, and the Tatars met their end at the Egyptian frontier. They never prospered thenceforth.

Similarly, the Western Crusades were launched against us with sinister hatred and unparalleled savagery. The Islamic countries trembled with fright from the utter destruction brought by those villain invaders. Egypt, however, stood up against this fear and resisted for two whole centuries until the invader's power broke and he withdrew in defeat and humiliation.

Religious emotion is the key to Egyptian personality. If this sound Egyptian spirit were to find in the religion of Islam an atmosphere in which it could prosper, and in the Islamic Weltanschauung a friendly and secure domain; and if Islam were to find in this good nation loving and faithful hearts who would observe its commands and realize its ideals, there should be forthcoming a bright future and a great good not for Egypt and the Arab lands alone, but for the world as a whole.

\* \* \* \* \*

The imperialistic powers which have colonized the Islamic East know this truth very well. Nothing is more terrifying to them than the growth of an Islamic movement that aims at reuniting us with our past--a past directly connected with our own nature and inclinations--and that prepares us for our great destiny on the lines of that movement which played havoc with the Tatar hordes, tore to shreds the Crusaders' armies, washed the soil clean of its invaders, and thus saved the civilization of Islam. Since that time, the English and the French, among other high priests of politics and monks of imperialism, have concentrated their powers on separating religion from the state, on isolating Islam from legislation and government and limiting it to

live out its life in a forlorn mosque or in a sickly and decadent congregation.

The foreign powers were not alone in this effort. Domestic imperialism has contributed continuously to the corruption of religion and the lessening of its significance. It has sought to bring up a generation of men who are Muslim in name only, who are ignorant, superstitious, and dogmatic.

As the Nile waters vanish uselessly into the depths of the Mediterranean, so the latent religious emotions of the people disappear in the atmosphere created and preserved by domestic imperialism for the purpose of assisting its foreign counterpart. The object of domestic imperialism is precisely to spread dejection and moral defeat, to congeal the warm, surging emotions of the people and orient them away from their traditional spirituality and faith towards dead pacifism, lowly humiliation, and the acceptance of the status quo.

For the last thirty years this nation has been in strenuous revolt against the English; it has shaken their pride and forced them out of their strongholds.

In Cairo, rebels used to come forth in processions from al-Azhar Mosque, as if the religious spirit itself were walking out from within the holy place. The imperialists, however, together with their puppets, have continued to counteract the effects of this great rebellion up to the present. Today, their finger is recognizable even in insignificant trivialities. They went so far as to use, in our universities, books that speak ill of our great Prophet, Muhammad, and to accept a doctoral dissertation doubting the historical reports of the Koran.

Thus imperialism continued to drive deeper its wedge between religion and the state, society and ethics, and finally succeeded in bringing about moral confusion and in cutting the nation off from its past.

Nothing has been substituted for that part of its precious legacy which the nation has lost. And to prepare this nation for reform and rebirth without religion is as possible as to teach an elephant how to fly.

We have written this book in order to determine these verities rather than as an answer to the book, "From Here We Start".

The deserting caravan began its wrong course many years

ago. Certainly, it was not waiting for Sheikh Khālīd to plot its ungodly and sinister journey.

The spirit of religious resistance throbs in the hearts of all of us--whether persons or groups; and we have resolved to live as Muslims under the Book and the Sunnah [Path of the Prophet]--or die.

But if we are to die in the course of this struggle, we shall not perish alone. The enemies of Islam shall perish with or before us.

The religion we believe in and defend is that Islam which Muhammad brought to us from above; it is that pure Islam which some governments have observed and upheld wholeheartedly and in good faith. The wretched caprices of covetous governors or the superstitious impostures of hypocritical priests are, and will remain, only matters for caricature. Their attacks upon religion, however subtle, are old and unavailing. For it has been told:

And who have spoilt religion  
Except the kings and evil priests  
Who sold out souls for money  
Yet never did profit thereby?

Let us first convince ourselves of this truth, and then, let us turn the lost caravan in the direction of the true path and press forward under God's hand towards the great end and the noble tomorrow.

Muhammad al-Ghazzālī

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

To defend Islam against attack and to remove the obstacles that obstruct its forward movement is a sacred duty. We have long suspected the attacks to which the most important teachings of our religion have been exposed. We have also distrusted the systematic exploitation of these attacks by certain powers, as well as their exploitation of the retreats, concessions, or servile acquiescences on the part of the weak and ignorant people exposed to them. At last it has become clear to us that there exists a widespread conspiracy plotted by religious and cultural imperialism against Islam. The purpose of this conspiracy has been to destroy the position which Islam occupies in the hearts of the faithful and annihilate every hope in those who fight against infidelism and imperialism.

We remember that in the Middle Ages Europe declared upon Islam a war which lasted two hundred years--but to no avail. All the Crusades succeeded in doing was to ignite in Europe a hatred and sinister fury against us that has raged unappeased to the present day.

Then came the present age which saw the old hatred combine with covetousness and fanaticism. The time was now opportune for dealing Islam a blow that would tear its great people apart into numerous states and territories, and distribute these dead branches among the covetous invaders. The European countries agreed to combat with all their power every inclination we might have to return to Islamic rule and Islamic law. In every treaty they negotiated with us they made it a cardinal point that our promulgated laws should be only an extension of their own corrupt laws. To derive our law from its original sources--from the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Prophet--that was the greatest of evils, the terrible reaction from which, so they say, they came to save us.

A few years ago, at the height of this holy war when there was a veritable fury of faith to do battle for God and the Prophet, there appeared "al-Islam wa Usūl al-Hukm"



[Islam and the Fundamentals of Government], in which Sheikh Ali Abd al-Rāziq, its author, advocated the thesis that religion and the state have no relation to each other. Written by a Muslim 'alim in this critical period of Islamic history, the book had a most evil effect. The soldiers of Islam recognized in it an instrument by which its author had, with or without intention, served the cause of Christian imperialism. It was for this reason that al-Azhar withdrew the title of 'alim from Sheikh Rāziq.

The next blow was struck by Sheikh Abd al-Muta'āl al-Ṣa'fī, who tried to destroy the Islamic prohibitions laid down in the Book and the Sunnah. His argument was that these were intended as counsel rather than law. But such nonsense need not surprise us.

Lately, there appeared Sheikh Khālid Muhammad Khālid's "From Here We Start", to which we dedicate this work as an answer. Sheikh Khālid has presented some new arguments, but also many old ones similar to those set forth by Sheikh Ali Abd al-Rāziq.

There need be no apology, however, for our discovery of so much error and nonsense in Sheikh Khālid's book. Many of his conclusions would remain unacceptable even if we were to grant his original premises.

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Freedom of opinion does not necessarily imply the protection of error or the prolongation of its life. The most error can expect is the chance to live out its short-lived span. The method we propose to follow in our fight against an idea is the presentation of another idea. As representatives of Islam we do not fear any attack upon our religion, for we are convinced that such an attack would fail from the very beginning. Thus we shall accept the doubts, questions, criticisms, and opposition and allow these to work freely until we can bring them face to face with the truth and thus destroy them all. For, as the poet has said, "And when Moses came and threw his stick, all magic stopped still, and all spell was undone."

I wish to state that I have been a personal friend of Sheikh Khālid for many years; but as this noble soul could not bear an error in a speech by Sheikh al-Islam Ismā'īl al-Harawī--who was also his personal friend--and introduced

his objection with the words: "A sheikh of Islam is dear to us all but the truth is dearer still!"; I feel that I must do likewise.

There has been some speculation as to whether al-Azhar would withdraw Sheikh Khālid's title of 'alim. Such a measure merits comment. Al-Azhar has two, or rather, many standards by which to measure such matters. It previously issued such an order against Ali Abd al-Rāziq and then revoked it, and it was considered sufficient to transfer Sheikh Abd al-Muta'āl from the College of Arts to the Preparatory Section. The crime of Sheikh Khālid cannot be any different from these.

A further question presents itself. Does al-Azhar take into account the theoretical error alone or the moral mistake as well?

We know, for instance, that Sheikh Aḥmad Shākir, Qāḍī [judge] of the Shar'iyah Courts, has decreed that the members of the Muslim Brotherhood are unbelievers (!) and that whoever fights them is a soldier, beloved of God. Now the person who makes such a decree should be expelled from the community of 'ulama. But nobody even investigated him.

There are many other sheikhs who lead all sorts of reactionary and fanatical movements inside al-Azhar itself, thereby reviving the worst days of primitive Jāhiliyah. All of them have kept their diplomas and titles, and nobody has thought of denying the enjoyment of these to them. There are also many sheikhs whose entire careers have been a fight against everything great and noble, who have occupied high offices at al-Azhar, and thus spread spiritual anarchy and forced the genuine 'ulama to withdraw. Why should we allow these men to enjoy their spiritual and intellectual titles and consider denying them to Sheikh Khālid alone? We only hope that al-Azhar will reconsider its position respecting this matter in the light of all these instances.

Be that as it may, we are here interested only in investigating the facts themselves. "God tells the truth and guides our way."

Muhammad al-Ghazzālī

## Chapter I

### ISLAMIC, NOT NATIONAL RULE

Do they seek to return to the régime of Jāhiliyah  
when there is none better than the rule of God?

Holy Koran

If thou wilt break Islam piece by piece, deny it  
first worldly rule and lastly prayer.

A Hadith

One day's rule by a just leader is better than  
sixty years' worship, and one prohibition carried  
out justly is better for the world than a forty  
days' rain.

The Traditions of the Prophet

#### 1.

##### An Old Mistake

Many believe that Islam, as law, was suspended only a century ago, when the French laws were made the basis for government in Egypt, and that hitherto Islam had been wholly sound in its creed, which creates peace in men's hearts, and in its authority, which should prevail in society. This belief, however, is erroneous. The criminal and civil codes in use before the adoption of French law were only branches of the real constitution, which is the source of all government, and which determines the relation between the nation and its rulers prior to its definition of the relations of the governed among themselves.

This important constitution, however, was non-existent at that time, when lawful decrees were applied in but trivial matters and minor problems.

It was, perhaps, the absence of such a constitution that

enabled one of the Muslim rulers to abolish by a stroke of the pen the legislation of the Koran and the Sunnah and replace it with the Christian, or rather, infidel, Code Napoléon. And it was likewise the absence of this constitution that made it possible for a number of absolute rulers to govern not only the Muslims but Islam itself according to their own inclinations and whims. We remember how one of them abrogated the prohibitions and allowed usury and debauchery to pass unpunished. The Arab East still abounds in absolute rulers who stop at no limit of power and aggression, whereas the 'ulama remain silent and the public remains dumb! This is a matter that concerns religion directly since religion is the basis of this world and of the next. Absolute rule is a very dangerous thing indeed. Its destructive power saps the strength of the nation and finally brings on political and moral ruin.

We are accustomed to treat the symptoms and forget the disease itself. We cover the pale face with paint and the decrepit body with clothes. We do not care to seek the hidden root of the affliction. We have thus remained silent regarding that part of Islam which concerns worldly government and thereby we have allowed it to be forgotten. Later, other parts of Islam suffered the same negligence until practically the whole Islamic doctrine, together with the rights and future of the people, fell into the clutches of tyrants.

When the Muslims awoke and resolved to return to the faith and laws of Islam, they began their program at the wrong end. They demanded the re-establishment of the prohibitions and other observances, but did not stop to deal with the political circumstances that had allowed a ruler to discard Islamic law, and that may permit the same occurrence in the future. They did not consider putting an end to the unjust social circumstances that make bad government possible.

On the other hand, the fear of certain dictatorial governments caused some people to follow a line of dangerous and morbid reasoning. When they saw the dictators commit every manner of injustice in the name of religion and when they realized that they were unable to charge those dictators personally with their crimes, they found it easy to charge religion itself with the crimes of those who governed in its

name. Thus, they argued, religion should not rule, because those who have ruled in religion's name did such and such things. As if religion should bear the shame and guilt of its prelates! This is simply bad logic, and it does not behoove us even to consider it.

We should blame the guilty without fear. We should openly despise and condemn those who set themselves up as rulers in the name of religion when they themselves have none, or those who look upon religion only as a prop and support for their vicious, worldly desires.

Finally, we should reserve only a contemptible glance for the 'ālim who exchanges his religion for the goods of this world and joins the procession of the unjust in order to rationalize their conduct.

## 2.

### The Power to Rule Is Indispensable for Reconstruction

Islam is not a theory of geometry which must be merely proved or understood. Nor is it an abstract theory which we may study if we have the inclination. Rather, it is a comprehensive program presented to man for the purpose of a general reconstruction of individual societies and states in accordance with practical as well as spiritual principles. It would be idle to claim that in a program of reconstruction there is no place for worldly government or no need therefor. Even if it were the case that Islam did not actually intend to take over the government of the world, it would not be surprising if it oriented itself towards the seizure of worldly power.

Let us look at the French Revolution. It was carried out under the banner of liberty, equality, and fraternity. It did not realize its ideals through preaching and propaganda alone but overthrew the government, seized power and effected its principles. Its orientation towards political power was never questioned. So too, the leaders of the Red Revolution in Russia never doubted that political power was indispensable for their purpose or that their ideas could live at all without political power, state sovereignty, and the manifestations of force. Islam came to us with principles far more important and valuable than those of both these revolutions. If success

is to be achieved, the methods of reconstruction that Islam commands cannot be any different from those of world reformers in other times and places.

That is precisely the case with the great Prophet, the founder of this doctrine; for he began as a preacher, messenger and warner, and ended as a ruler and judge. His prophethood commenced as a message rejected and suppressed and ended as a state that grasped for God and itself what it wanted. The government established by Islam was based upon definite principles; it bore the Islamic idea and sought to realize it on earth. If such a government seeks power, it is in order "to hold prayer, to give alms, to command the realization of what is good and to prevent what is evil." As the Russian government is now based entirely on communism, so would the Islamic state be based upon the principles of Islam, and be primarily concerned with its defense and propagation through religious means. Such a government must of course consecrate religious feeling, respect divine commands, and allow God's words to remain supreme. The Prophet carried out the duties of the head-of-state upon this clear understanding, and so did the Orthodox Caliphs after him. They sought and achieved power not for worldly ends--the world and its riches were beneath their feet--but for the love of God alone and for His sake. In fact, they sacrificed their persons, riches and children that Islam might have a government capable of safeguarding it and implementing its principles.

In the sequel we shall produce the texts in which the position of the state in Islam is defined. Before doing so, however, we shall cast a quick glance at the present situation.

### 3.

#### An Effect of the Crusades

The denial to Islam of its absolute right to rule, and its consideration as a religion separate from the state, is the effect of the traditional enmity that Europe has always felt for Islam and its peoples. The aim of Europe is the destruction of Islam as a religion once it has succeeded in destroying it as a state.

It is the Crusader's resentment that has inspired the promulgation of secular laws and the obstruction of every attempt at applying the divine ordinances.

Some may doubt that Europe is motivated by Crusader feelings against Islam. They are usually misled by the fact that European governments have divorced religion in its entirety, that they act no longer by Christian inspiration. But the truth is otherwise. The official title of the king of England is still Defender of the Faith, and the first item on the program of the Conservative Party is the establishment of a Christian civilization. The party in power in Italy is the Christian Democratic Party, and the majority of voters in Belgium have voted for the Christian Socialist candidates. Throughout Europe there are political leaders who are led by purely Christian ideals.

True, a few centuries ago a dispute arose between church and state that led to the defeat and exclusion of the former from power. Subsequently, the church realized that its bad leadership was responsible for this misfortune; accordingly, it began to reform and purify itself. It was thereby able to re-establish contact with public life and continued to penetrate the latter until, as we know, Marshall Allenby could state as he entered Jerusalem, "Today the Crusades have come to an end."

And that is a military man speaking--neither a monk nor a priest. The truth is that Europe's hatred for Islam and its peoples has grown so acute that it has allowed the establishment of Israel and furnished it with sufficient material and moral support to enable it to wax strong and to conquer. This state of Israel which lives, as it were, in the lap of the Christian West itself, presents us with Judaism as both religion and state. It is ironic that Islam is denied any worldly power and is allowed to subsist merely as a spiritual philosophy at a time when Judaism and Christianity arm themselves more heavily and send the nations to war against us. Is this the wish of Professor Khālid?

Undoubtedly imperialism has succeeded in creating a generation of Muslims who cooperate with the enemies of Islam to destroy their own religion. Unfortunately, a good number of educated men now believe that Islam is a religion only and not a state. More unfortunately, a number of 'ulamas have been converted to this trend of thought, perhaps

without realizing its full import. Today the state does not belong to Islam. This is a grave matter and a thing of great shame, the occurrence of which should be regarded as a pernicious attack upon religion and a violation of its unquestionable right. The attempt to justify it in a way such as would make it still acceptable to Islam is an attempt to induce religion to accept the crime that has been perpetrated against one half of its own being, while the other half lives out its short life. In Islam political power is a barrier to protect its territory against foreign attack; but, in addition, it is a positive means of realizing its ideal through instruction, education, orientation, and enlightenment. We shall present the Koranic verses and Hadiths that prove these points and answer the objections and doubts of various authors.

## 4.

## Doubts Regarding Religious Rule

It is easy to confuse the leaders of a religious regime wherever it exists with "the men of religion". Similarly, it is easy to associate "the men of religion" with large turbans, long beards, and flowing robes. Such confusions may give us the idea that the ministers of a religious government will spend their time worrying about the hereafter and thus turn backwards the wheels of worldly life. Devoting, as they will, most of their time to preparation for the life to come, the business of this world and its reform will remain neglected. A cabinet of ministers concerned with such matters cannot grasp the reins of government.

To assume the contrary is sheer illusion and, with respect to Islam, it is indeed a shameful mistake. For our part we do not know of a religious order that carries the strange and suspicious title of "men of religion". There may be in any order a number of persons who specialize in the study of the Book and the Sunnah. Such a field of study can form but a limited part of the wide Islamic culture which includes the whole body of the arts and sciences, and embraces all knowledge whether material or spiritual.

The students of the Book and the Sunnah represent but a limited portion of the Muslims. They may be beneath other

Muslims in intelligence and power, or they may surpass them. Religious knowledge has never been a prerequisite for governorship even in the most resplendent periods of Islamic history. Abu-Hurayrah, ibn-Omar, and ibn-Mas'ūd were among the most learned men of their time. Their interpretations of the meaning of the Koran and the Sunnah were as numerous and significant as the anecdotes they had to tell about the Prophet. Yet their place in the founding of the Islamic state has been far inferior to that of the first four caliphs, or to that of Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqas, Khālid ibn-al-Walīd, or abi-'Ubaydah ibn-al-Jarrāḥ.

In fact, all Muslims are "men of their religion". Whether they serve in the field of war, politics, administration, industry or science does not affect their worth or lack of it with respect to Islam. No one person has any stronger claim to belong to Islam than any other.

The true picture of a religious government that Islam presents is one of free men who dedicate themselves and sacrifice their happiness for the sake of their religion and nation. It is the picture of great talents and tremendous capacities, of vision and clarity of understanding, of trust and will power--with which ideals are realized and the happiness of nations achieved. It is the picture of individuals endowed with the abilities of Abd al-Rahmān ibn-'Awwf in commerce and trade, of ibn-al-Walīd in military leadership, of ibn-al-Khaṭṭāb in administration and justice. Such men may be born in humble station. Only their capabilities and talents should distinguish them among the many and account for their rise in the various fields of endeavor.

Religious rule is not a collection of Sufis and dervishes who live on the material benefits of consecrated superstitions. Where it has degenerated to this, it has simply ceased to be Islam.

## 5.

## Are There Religious Governments Today?

It may be thought that religious rule is not lacking in examples from which we can learn about its purposes and methods. Such instances supposedly abound in the Arabian Peninsula--Yemen in the South, Nejd and Hejaz in the North.

The root of this misconception is the fact that only in these countries is the thief's hand cut off and the adulterer flogged. That is to say, these are the only Islamic governments which still insist on the application of such laws. We do not dispute that these prohibitions are part of Islam, but they are far from being the whole of it. We certainly wish to see the prohibitions observed so that the rights and security and virtues of the people may be preserved. But this is far from desiring that the hand of a hungry youth who has stolen a penny be cut off, while the rulers swim in the gold stolen from the state treasury and the wealth of the people.

The Arabian Peninsula is one of the poorest countries in the world. Its people have the lowest possible standard of living. If we consider that a certain number of families have monopolized the food supplies of the whole land, have controlled production, and appropriated the proceeds of all its mines, oil, and other resources, can their rule be called religious at all? Or for that matter, can it even be called civil? Many infidel nations are far more just and righteous in the exercise of their rule, and their peoples enjoy a higher standard of living than those of the Arab lands. How then can the chaos, injustice, and oppression of the Arab lands be called Islamic rule?

The truth is that those lands are only a collection of masters and slaves!

We have seen that criminal and financial ordinances are only a branch of the general constitution which must first be decided upon, and in which the rights and obligations of ruler and ruled should be defined. Where such a constitution is absent, the branch can have neither point nor significance. The Arabian Peninsula has no constitution whatsoever--the absolute sovereignty of one individual prevails. And when the situation is such that following the example of Pharaoh, the ruler proclaims to his followers, "I am God, thy great lord and master," how can it be said that there are any laws and prohibitions at all?

During the days of the Orthodox Caliphate the treasury belonged to the whole people, and the ruler had title only to the least amount required for his sustenance.

In the Arabian Peninsula, the treasury belongs first to the ruler. He takes for himself the lion's share, and then throws what is left to the public welfare.

Obviously, these governments are not religious, nor have divine laws been observed in them. Regretfully enough, these lands have first to save their very being from crumbling away. Only after they have succeeded in doing this will it be possible to raise them to the standard towards which Islam aims.

Before they have secured a political being at all, it is simply improper to say that these governments have applied Islam as religion or as state.

## 6.

## The Error

Instead of realizing this truth and dealing with the so-called religious governments in the light of it, our colleague, Professor Khālid, has done the exact opposite. He should have acquitted religion and imputed to these governments the guilt of their own crimes. In his book, "From Here We Start", he has charged all the crimes to religion itself; and he has argued that since there have been rulers who ruled in the name of religion and went astray, religion must be denied any worldly rule or executive power.

This is, of course, unjust to Islam. Moreover, it is a deliberate overlooking of Islam's aims. And what is even worse, it allows the real criminal who thus perpetrated his crimes in the name of God and Prophet to go free.

Why do we not say once and for all: "There are bold and daring persons who have robbed whole lands and generations, established states in their own personal names, and built up glory for themselves and their posterity; that despite the halo surrounding it, their achievement is neither more nor less than that of a pickpocket, though performed on a tremendously larger scale! As a pickpocket is always prepared to wound or even kill his victim, the great robbers of history who assume the role of leaders, conquerors and adventurers, kill everywhere they go and trample on the rights of the people. Some of these 'adventurers' were so tyrannical in their exercise of power that disturbing psychological conflicts have developed in the people as a result."

Why do we not single out the crime and its perpetrators and say: "These have nothing to do with Islam," or rather,

"Islam is ashamed of their abuse of its texts."? But to charge Islam with their crimes is definitely a mistake.

## 7.

## The Prohibitions and the Need for Their Observance

It seems that Professor Khālid is not satisfied with the methods by which the so-called Islamic governments have applied the prohibitions. Hence, he has fallen into the same error of attributing shortcomings to the prohibitions rather than to prevailing economic and social circumstances.

The charge against the actual prohibitions that Islam has instituted is devoid of grounds.

It is not true that the application of these prohibitions is subject to other considerations, or that they are meant solely as a warning, or that the Prophet himself cancelled them.

The commandments in the Book and the Sunnah are very clear. In many cases the Prophet applied them, to the letter, and turned down the pleas of his dearest friends for leniency. Sometimes he found immediate evidence sufficient for establishing the crime; in these cases he did not wait to hear the witnesses. This has led certain jurists to accept immediate evidence as satisfactory for acquittal or conviction. It is true, on the other hand, that the Prophet asked certain accused persons to reconsider their confessions, but every one of these cases had its explanation. Together, if they point to anything, these cases point to the greatness of religion and the magnanimity of the Prophet. The first purpose of the prohibitions is, and will remain, the fight against crime and the punishment of its perpetrators.

Undoubtedly, a believer may sometimes stumble and fall into crime. If he is an ardent believer, his conscience will give him no peace. Anxious to repent and purify himself, such a person may run to the Prophet and confess his fault.

Is it appropriate to call such helpless victims criminals, and subject them to execution as soon as they have made their plea?

Certainly not, for the Prophet is not a public prosecutor whose business is to corner the accused where he may be condemned. Rather, he is a benevolent educator and merciful guardian. It is he who has said: "Assist those who are

of good faith and remove the obstacles from their paths. With God's help none of them would fall."

Obviously, a person who comes in tears to repent has a most sensitive conscience and a rare moral integrity. It is the right of society and mankind to safeguard his life that he may live for the service and ennoblement of his brethren.

This is precisely what the Prophet meant when he asked the repenters to reconsider their avowals. Can we picture the woman called al-Ghāmidiyah who came to him pregnant and asked to be stoned? The Prophet sent her away. Later she came back with her baby, asking again to be stoned, and was sent back for the second time. Later still, she returned with her young child and repeated her request for punishment. Is it possible that the Prophet withheld sentence so that this woman might repeat her crime and furnish an evil example? No. That woman was repentance and purity personified. If the Prophet treated her and her like in a special manner, he certainly had good reason to do so.

But where evil conduct appears deliberate and is likely to be continued, the right of society to prosecute and punish becomes unquestionable. In these cases we have seen the Prophet order execution without mercy; and such is the command and teaching of God.

Those investigators who hastily conclude from the few cases where execution was withheld that the law itself had become null and void, or at least doubtful, must be short-sighted.

What narrow vision! The laws of modern times are not subject to the same misunderstanding, despite the fact that courts of justice do consider the circumstances surrounding the accused and accordingly judge the misdemeanor a crime, or the crime an unhappy misdemeanor. Can it then be said that this is a nullification of the promulgated law? Does not the law still stand, and the consideration of an extenuating circumstances also stand as a part of it?

This is the judgment of common sense. It is surprising that Sheikh Khālid, as well as Sheikh Abd al-Muta'āl before him, could fall into this mistaken line of reasoning.

It was reported by 'Ā'ishah that the Quraysh tribe was agitated by the affair of Makhzūmiyah, the thief; and it was asked who would dare address the Prophet on the subject.

It was thought that only Usāmah ibn-Zayd, the Prophet's friend, would do so. Usāmah addressed the Prophet, asking him whether he would consider forgiving a person who had committed an act prohibited by God. The Prophet, realizing Usāmah's motive, immediately called the believers and said: "Your ancestors perished because they punished the guilt of the weak and forgave the guilt of the strong. By God, if Fāṭimah, the daughter of Muhammad, has stolen, I shall cut off her hand!"

It was also reported by ibn-Omar that he heard the Prophet say, "Whoever intervenes against the application of a prohibition and succeeds, has thereby displeased God."

And it was reported by Zubayr that he met a person who was dragging a thief to the sultan for prosecution. Zubayr intervened in favor of the thief. The other person replied, "No, I shall forgive him after he has been judged." So Zubayr answered, "Forgiveness, my friend, must come before judgment. If it comes after judgment, accused and accuser are equally accursed."

\* \* \* \* \*

To attack God's prohibitions and deny them application is part of modern civilization's scheme for forsaking His religion. Europe could not hear words more sweet than those telling of how the Muslims were progressively discarding their religion as faith and law. Faith and law cannot be separated. If we should ever abandon the latter, as in the case of the prohibitions, we would, in a short time, abandon the former; for prayer, fasting, alms-giving, and pilgrimage are no less subject to extenuating circumstances than the prohibitions. Thus, if we were to begin discarding a part of religion, as Sheikh Khālid would have us do, we should soon be discarding the whole.

\* \* \* \* \*

I discussed both theft and adultery in my book "al-Islam wa al-'Awḍā' al-Iqtisādiyyah" without attacking God's prohibitions in the least. Then I examine thoroughly the variations in the execution of the laws today. Had the 'ulama followed my method, they would have served religion, set the people's minds at rest and established justice.

8.

### Part of a Religious Government's Program

Those who believe that the prohibitions should be shelved because of the difficulties arising from their application simply misunderstand the unambiguous texts we have mentioned.

Professor Khālid thinks that even if the prohibitions are established and should be applied, they can be added to the secular ordinances and their execution can be taken over by a civil government.

We hold that the prohibitions are established, that they are part of the Islamic teaching, and that it is the duty of a government having any religious pride at all to support their application.

If England were to enter the prohibitions in its ordinances, it would not on that account become an Islamic state. The state in Islam is the embodiment of an idea by and for which it lives, as Communist Russia is the embodiment of an idea by which its internal and foreign policies are regulated, and to which, in complete sincerity, it lives.

The view that the purpose of the state is the application of certain artificial ordinances is erroneous. In the political sphere, Islam is a free democracy; in the economic, it is tempered socialism. The principles under which the education of the people will be effected and their moral standards enhanced are the concern of the state. It is its duty so to lead the people and organize their lives as to attain the ideals set forth in the Koran and the Sunnah.

In any event, to picture a villain like Yazīd or a murderer like al-Ḥajjāj and say, "These are the fruits of religious rule," is a mistake and an unacceptable charge.

9.

### Do We Want a Defenseless Faith?

Muslim scholars as well as others have agreed that the monotheistic thesis is the basis of Islam. We have previously explained that the maintenance of this thesis entails the establishment of the rights of man--of liberty, equality, and fraternity--since true monotheism implies that all



men are the servants of one god. Should any man arrogantly rise above his equals and impress his will upon them, immediate action should be taken to obstruct his grasp for power and reinstate him in his proper station in life. The proud aristocrats, however, do not readily give up their hereditary power. It is in their interest to restrict the dissemination of this destructive monotheistic thesis.

A poet has said, "Would he who is not convinced of a right step aside and injure not him who is convinced?"

The hard fact, however, is that war is as old as faith. Faith makes no progress in this world except through the efforts of martyrs. Let us look at the example of the prophets. Despite their eloquence, their noble purpose and their candor, they were unable to unlock the hearts of their peoples. They were ignored, despised, and suspected. Moreover, they were asked to recant or flee. "Their apostles came to them with evident miracles; but they clapped their hands to their mouths out of indignation, and said, We do not believe the message with which ye pretend to be sent, and we are in doubt..."\*

If, therefore, unbelief has its political state that gives its false logic life and power, then, a fortiori, faith should not be left without a political stronghold to give it protection, to defend it against its enemies and to champion the cause of believers everywhere.

Islam went through the same difficult beginning suffered by the other religions. It was cast out by the ruling powers of Mecca. Then it established its own state in Medina and later recovered what it had lost in Mecca. As the Islamic state arose, its first act was to send its armies of liberation to destroy the self-deified Chosroism of Persia and Caesarism of Rome, and to grant the right of life to the people who had suffered for centuries under the tutelage of those evil powers. For it was impossible, under the dictatorial regimes of the ancient world, that a religious message should spread through discussion and argument. During the first centuries of its life, Christianity also felt itself in dire need of a protecting, worldly state. Despite its essential otherworldliness, it sought and achieved dominion over the Imperium

\*The quotations from the Koran are given according to the translation of George Sale.

Romanum. Islam, which, unlike Christianity, is fundamentally in favor of worldly power, is surely a state and not a religion alone. It is strange that the claim that Islam is only a religion should come at a time when the principles of Karl Marx have actually taken to arms--when unbelief has itself become a faith and sent its soldiers to destroy the mosques of the Caucasus and disperse thirty million Muslims--when the traditional enmity of the Christian West to the Islamic East has been revived. The West surely seeks to humiliate us, to occupy our land and begin destroying Islam by annulling its laws and abolishing its traditions.

In doing this, the West acts under the guidance of the Church. Consequently, can this claim denying Islam political power be made on a more inopportune occasion? Seldom, if ever, has Islam needed the state more than today--not merely because the state is an integral part of it, but also because Islam itself is threatened with extermination in a world where only the strong can survive. Actually, the non-Islamic governments of the East are only an expression of the ungodly instincts of unbelief, false pride, and covetousness. In the West, on the other hand, we have seen how Christianity indirectly controls the governments. Professor Khālid's contention--that religion consists merely of road-signs intended to orient life's travellers and, as such, has nothing to do with the state--is pure fiction. The truth is that the road is full of gangsters. Unless religion moves along it as a strong, well-defended caravan, it will surely meet its end.

10.

#### The Instincts of Religious Government

Sheikh Khālid has chosen the foregoing title for one of his chapters in order to introduce to his readers the evils of religious rule. His description of it would suit better a wild beast whose victim's blood still drips from his teeth and claws. How more à propos his description would have been had he given that chapter the title, "The Instincts of Despotism", and then set out to show how un-Islamic such rule is, and how unjust to man and religion alike. Had he followed this suggestion, he would have saved religion

from the hands of those who mean to exploit it for their own benefit. Then, too, he would have avoided falling into the following serious contradiction, for he immediately proceeded to say: "Religious government is far removed from religion. The truth is that religious government, though it may succeed in giving itself this name and thus make one believe it is related to religion, does not receive its inspiration from the Book of God or the Sunnah of His Prophet but from the persons of the rulers, their ambitions and interests." Why then, we ask, should such a government be called "religious" since its constitution has no relation to the Book of God or the Sunnah of His Prophet? Why should its crimes be charged to religion, and religion be thus denied the chance to condemn what is contrary to its nature and doctrine? After having discussed the nature of Islam, Professor Khālid should have exhorted religious governments to observe that nature or stop calling themselves religious. But he straightway went on to enumerate the infinite shortcomings of so-called religious governments. These are poor arguments. Religion still has no reason for being separated from politics and, much less, from the actual government of men's lives. Running short of examples, Professor Khālid finally stumbled upon this: "Under Islamic religious governments many terrible crimes have been perpetrated; and one religious ruler, namely al-Ḥajjāj, exterminated all the companions of the Prophet who still lived during his reign."

For the first time in my life, I hear that al-Ḥajjāj was a "religious" ruler. Al-Ḥajjāj himself was never so ambitious as to claim this title, and no historian ever designated him thus. From this example of al-Ḥajjāj, Professor Khālid leaps to the conclusion that a religion in whose name al-Ḥajjāj has ruled is not itself fit to rule.

Ibn-abi-Baradah ibn-abi-Musa al-Ash'ari once described al-Ḥajjāj to Sulayman ibn-Abd al-Malik thus: "Oh Prince of Believers! al-Ḥajjāj, enemy of God, used to adorn himself like a prostitute. When he ascended the pulpit, he used to utter the noblest words. When he descended it, he performed the acts of the pharaohs. In his conversation he was less trustworthy than a fortune teller."

The history of al-Ḥajjāj is the best example of the irreligiousness of rulers and their abuse of human life. Had al-Ḥajjāj's punishment fallen to him in this world, it would not have been anything less than hanging.

Despite this, however, Professor Khālid insists upon considering the case of al-Ḥajjāj as a revelation of Islam, and therefore as an argument against God's religion and His Prophet.

Another case in point would be that of Napoleon Bonaparte (May God forgive him!). After his contact with the 'ulama of al-Azhar he adopted Islam and wore the turban of piety. But he continued committing innumerable crimes. Sheikh Khālid might have argued here that because of Napoleon's blameworthy conduct Islam should not be a state. According to Khālid, the sinister, priestly instincts of religious government stirred within Napoleon, and that would be a sufficient indication of the danger of giving religion the power to rule.

# 11.

## Aberration!

Criticizing religious government, Professor Khālid says: "What is the constitution of religious government, by which it operates and for which it strives? This is the question religious government tries to avoid. When it is finally pressed for an answer, it finds refuge in ambiguity and darkness, which are the traditional prerequisites for its existence. 'It is religion; it is the Koran,' it says. But the Koran, as Ali has pointed out, is susceptible of many interpretations; and so is the Sunnah." These words are miserable. We should not even have concerned ourselves if Khālid had continued to berate the so-called religious rulers in person, but this attack is directed against religion itself. Whereas religious government was criticized as being based upon the passions of the rulers, now it is condemned because it is based on religion, the Koran and the Sunnah, which--in Khālid's opinion--are themselves ambiguous and unclear. Here we find our opinion directly at odds with that of Khālid. The Koran is a lucid book of which God himself has said, "These are the clear verses of the Book." The Sunnah is an additional clarification of what the Koran has concisely summed up. It is easy to appreciate the great body of principles and convictions which are accepted by all Muslims without dispute or variance. Had the

Koran and the Sunnah been what Khālid thought they were, Islam would never have survived a single day or converted a single soul. Sheikh Khālid himself backed his views with many verses and traditions. "One of the characteristics of religion before priesthood permeated it," he wrote, "is the liberation of mankind from despotism and exploitation." Sheikh Khālid arrived at this conclusion through many religious texts, which he now describes as "ambiguous and susceptible of many interpretations".

It is true that in the language of the Koran there are many expressions and terms that are flexible and general in their meaning. The purpose of their use is to make the Koran readily understandable throughout the ages. That is part of greatness. Generality and flexibility of meaning are one thing, and obscurity and ambiguity are another. The Kharijites, it is true, misinterpreted the Koranic texts in order to support their claims. But Ali and the jurists were well aware of the equivocal meaning of certain texts; and for this reason ibn-'Abbās recommended that the Kharijites be answered, not with Koranic verses alone, but also with the unequivocal Sunnah, which is an explanatory commentary to the Koran. No 'alim in the history of Islam has ever held that both the Koran and the Sunnah are "ambiguous, obscure or susceptible of many interpretations".

When he sent ibn-'Abbās to debate with the Kharijites, Ali ibn-abi-Tālib recommended that he quote not the Koran alone because the Kharijites were ready and able to interpret those verses falsely. Ali wanted to oppose the Kharijites with the Prophet's decisive statements and thereby cut their argument short. He regarded the Sunnah as a final explanation of the Koran. To impress the reader that Ali considered the Sunnah itself susceptible of many interpretations, is a learned imposture of an unpardonable kind.

Consequently, the charge based upon this deceit--that the Koran and the Sunnah are obscure--is utterly groundless. Some of the verses that speak of God and his attributes may be supra-rational; the other verses, which deal with doctrine, principles, reports, and anecdotes--and which constitute the greater part of the Koran--are clear and rational. The latter alone are the source of legislation and the groundwork of government. "It is He who hath sent down unto thee the Book wherein are some verses clear and to be understood;

they are the foundation of the Book; and others are parabolical; but they whose hearts are perverse will follow that which is parabolical therein out of love of schism and a desire of the interpretation thereof."

The clear verses are final in what they say. They are not susceptible of any interpretation.

The other verses may have terms or expressions with flexible meaning that can be interpreted according to the logic and syntax of the language. But there is a great difference between flexibility and chaos of meaning. Our science of theology has developed an accurate method for sifting meanings. The 'ulama of Islam have written countless books in which the meanings of the texts of the Koran and the Sunnah have been analyzed and clarified. These books are monuments of lucidity and precision. But when Islam has fallen into a period in which the accused themselves have become leaders and judges, then comes Sheikh Khālid to prove, through their judgment and understanding, the untenable thesis that both the Book and the Sunnah are "obscure".

Usually people are criticized when they abandon their religion or transgress its laws. But Sheikh Khālid sees fit to blame religion when some of its sons go astray. Strange logic indeed! If al-Ḥajjāj fell into evil, the cause was the "obscurity" of the law, not the character of al-Ḥajjāj. And so many al-Ḥajjājs finally prove that religion itself is unfit to rule. If it is the case that the violation of a law is proof of its unsuitability, then the violation of our spiritual and moral standards by the public of modern times should be sufficient reason for our discarding these standards altogether.

Thus, we should wash our hands of Islam entirely. Perhaps this is what modern licence wishes to see achieved.

But the destruction of religious government is only the first step towards total annihilation.

In reality, the question is not one of diversity of interpretation or of the application of one version rather than another. Fundamentally, the question is whether the law is going to be applied at all or whether it will be made subservient to ulterior motives--whether we shall allow it to achieve its message or paralyze it through "interpretation".

What Professor Khālid mentions--namely, that Ali and Mu'āwiyah were supporting their opposing cases with the same verse, and the fact that the friends of the former were

provoking the people against Mu'āwiyah substantiated their charges against the murderers of Ali--is entirely false, and typifies a grave misunderstanding of the reasons for the historic dispute. Professor Khālid wishes to maintain that a Koranic verse could be adduced in support of a position as well as against it, that its doubtful obscurity makes of it a double-edged sword which can harm both friend and foe. In support of Khālid's thesis, let us cite a few other instances that might help the reader realize more fully its absurdity. I once caught a man of doubtful intentions running after a woman. In his self-defense, he quoted the following verse: "And who can prohibit the believers from admiring the beauties God has created?" On one occasion, the Egyptian government banished a few thousand of its best citizens. As it threw them into prisons and concentration camps prior to their deportation, the following verse was quoted in support of the government's action: "The punishment of those who fight God and His Prophet and spread dissension shall be death by the sword or the cross, or the amputation of their arms or legs, or their banishment from the land."

When war was declared in 1914 one of the senators, with the purpose of encouraging the Arabs to cooperate with the invading Allies against the Muslim Turks, wrote, borrowing the words of the Koran, "Thou shalt obey God and the Prophet and your leaders."

Thus we impute to the holy Koran the ambiguity and obscurity that really exists only in our own minds. We ascribe to it the covetousness of the ignoble. We shroud the true with the false, and say that the Koran is "susceptible of many interpretations". When the righteous dispute with the unrighteous and each party advances the same verse in its support, we sit with folded hands instead of smiting the shameless misinterpreter and restoring the right where it belongs. Thus Professor Khālid takes a midway stand in respect to the dispute of Yazīd and al-Hussein, of Ali and Mu'āwiyah. He puts the blame on the Koran because it is "ambiguous", and avoids facing the conflict and speaking the truth regarding those old tragedies or whatever might correspond to them in modern times.

## 12.

## Israel

Nobody would have been surprised had the Jews called their state, which they have cut off from our very being, the Jewish Republic, the Jewish Socialist Union, or any other such name corresponding to the actual state of affairs. The form of political organization they have chosen is clearly the republican. The Jews have not been as fortunate as their neighbors in Jordan, Hejaz or Yemen, who are ruled by deeply-rooted aristocratic families which give their own names to the states and governments. In Yemen it is the Mutawakkili government. In Jordan it is the Hashemite government. In Saudi Arabia it is the Saudi government. Following their example, the Jewish government would be the "Weizmannite" government. No, fortune was not so kind to the Jews as it was to the Arabs! Nor would the Jews have missed the truth if they had called their state "socialist". Socialist collectivist economy actually prevails in their agricultural settlements and, in all likelihood, pervades their industrial and commercial activities. There is no vestige of the feudalism that is the general rule in the countries of Islam.

Yet, the Jews have completely forgotten these auspicious signs by which they may have won some favor on the international front. Instead, they have returned to their ancient history, dug out its roots and appeared two thousand years after Christ with the name of "Israel". This name is the symbol of their attachment to their religion and their respect for their sacred memories. It should be observed that the Jews who have chosen to follow this course are themselves the greatest of capitalists, scientists, politicians, and economists, many of whom have shared in the splitting of the atom and participated in many other great inventions. None of these men felt ashamed to belong to their religion or thought of discarding it.

This happens among Jews at a time when there is hardly a field of science they have not penetrated, a foreign language they have not mastered, a Western tradition or custom they have not known and practiced. But when they speak of religion, they twist their tongues and speak only the language

of conservatives and reactionaries. What evil must we not expect to befall Islam at the hands of such adversaries.

Is it not one of the greatest of mysteries that those who have excelled in the material sciences believe in their false religions, and those who have hardly been introduced to these sciences choose to ignore their righteous and true Islam?

## 13.

## The Fallacy of Separating State and Religion

The gradual process of depriving religion of its right to rule began with Christianity. The history of the Middle Ages shows a continuous strife between the spiritual and secular authorities.

Practical expediences have made of Christianity a state as well as a religion, despite the fact that its texts clearly limit it to the spiritual field. In a sense we sympathize with the leaders of the Christian church for having tried to achieve power, because we know that the power of the enemies of Christianity succeeded in exposing the early Christians to great perils. The ruling paganism of the times had almost succeeded in exterminating Christianity and the Christians. It is natural that the latter sought to take away power from the hands of their enemies. Thus it was that the popes became, eventually, worldly governors.

In modern times we notice that the Church has greatly reformed itself and regained most of the power and influence it had lost. The leaders of the Church today are kings though they wear no crowns. The power of the Church is operative in orienting the internal and foreign policies of the Western Bloc, led by England and America. The declarations and speeches of Churchill and Truman can easily be mistaken for Sunday sermons in the churches of London or New York.

A hundred years ago the situation was one of enmity between the state and Christianity. Today, however, the relation is obviously a cordial alliance.

The stupid among our leaders, who think that the Egyptian state should abandon religion, still read the European books of a century ago. They are still unaware that the examples they try to imitate have long ago ceased to be valid.

Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that Europe insisted upon a separation of religion and state. After all, that is precisely what the Christian doctrine itself teaches. But this is no reason why we should follow suit; Islam is no doubt different from Christianity and the Koran different from the Bible. Anyone can compare the two and see the difference for himself.

There is yet another historical truth that distinguishes religious rule in Islam from religious rule in Christianity.

In Islam the religious ruler has neither saintliness nor any other special attribute that raises him to the rank of a God. Those caliphs who erred in their judgment were corrected in the name of God and the Prophet by some of their Muslim followers, and upon their withdrawal from office, a new religious government was established. Every person in Islam is a "man of religion". Religion is not a monopoly of any one group of people.

In Christianity the opposite is the case. Religion has men that it calls its own. Such men are endowed with privileges and special rights. They have been chosen and dedicated to their calling. The governments established by them have enjoyed, moreover, a unique character of saintliness and distinction. The people used to regard their actions as if they were the orientations of religion itself, and the situation was such that the people could not find their relation to religion except through these prelates. When, however, they discovered that the conduct of the fathers of the Church was unbecoming and was beyond their power to control, they rebelled against religion and its men alike.

The difference between Islam and Christianity in this respect, is equally apparent from the standpoint of theory and of historical actuality.

## 14.

## Islamic Rule between Judaism and Christianity

When I mention Islam in connection with the religions preceding it, I remember the words of the Prophet relative to Jesus: "I am the nearest of all to Jesus, son of Mary, in this world and in the next. I came directly after him. The prophets are all brethren; their mothers may be different,

but their religion is one and the same." If this candid expression is what our Prophet feels towards the prophet of Christianity, let us hear also what he said regarding Moses. Ibn-'Abbās reported: "The Prophet of God arrived once at Medina and found the Jews fasting on the day of Ashura. Upon his inquiry he was told by the Jews, 'This is a great day! It is the day when God saved Moses and the Jews from their enemies.' At this, the Prophet decided to fast the day with them and said, 'I am nearer to Moses than you are. Hence, I shall fast on this day and command everybody to do likewise.'"

Such is the attitude of the Prophet towards the founders of the two great religions prior to Islam.

Islam lost no opportunity of reproving both the Christians and the Jews whenever they only pretended to belong to their religion or failed to practice it in earnest. In the Koran God has said: "Thou shalt say, 'Oh People of the Book, your achievement is nil until you have put into practice the Torah and the Gospels and what has been commanded to you of God.'" Merely to belong to a religion is certainly insufficient. If the People of the Book had taken their scripture in earnest, they would have respected the Koran and the Prophet of God no less than the Muslims did. But they were far from giving their scripture practical devotion, so the writings that God sent later could not expect to fare better with them.

A quarter century ago the Muslim Brotherhood was formed for the reinstitution of the divine law, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". It was then believed that this was only a fanatical return to the Koran. If the Jews and Christians had taken their religion seriously, they would have joined in this association too, for these divine laws were enjoined by the Torah and the Gospels long before the Koran was ever revealed. The same is true of usury, adultery, and other vice. But the truth is that honest and sincere religious feeling has no place today except among the followers of Muhammad and under the Koran. Only Islamic rule can be expected to fight ungodliness with zeal, to do justice to Moses and Jesus, and to prevent their followers from masquerading in their names.

I remember that Maftāh Wahīb Dūs al-Muḥāmi once wrote in the magazine "al-Sh'ūn al-Ijtimā'iyah" [Social Affairs], in an article entitled "Lost Childhood":

"Is not world civilization today based upon the teachings of Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, each of whom was nothing in his childhood? Was not the first a foundling, as the Torah itself tells, and the second, actually a foundling who was picked up by a carpenter?..."

As soon as this article appeared, the whole of al-Azhar rose in revolt against the Ministry of Social Welfare for allowing such blasphemy to be perpetrated and published. Is it anything short of blasphemy to call the prophets Jesus and Moses "foundlings"? Or to call the Virgin's son "picked up by a carpenter"? The author, evidently, was a prominent Egyptian Christian; but the defender of Christ was al-Azhar, the school of the Koran and the Sunnah.

The need of the world for an Islamic rule that safeguards all revelation and keeps the moral standards intact cannot be doubted.

15.

#### Spiritual and Temporal Power

In order better to realize the need of Islam for state power and to understand that state rule is absolutely indispensable if religion is to attain its ideals, we shall quote from our book, "al-Islām wa al-Manāḥij al-Ishtirākīyah" [Islam and the Socialist Programs], the following passage from the chapter entitled "The Business of the State":

"In Islam, there are personal duties of worship which individuals can perform directly and through their own personal effort alone. Such are prayer, fasting, and other affiliated duties. But there are, in addition to these, social duties which individuals cannot discharge alone and which require the instrumentality of the state. Of these, there are jihad [holy war], punishment, charity, and others.... The origin and ground of these social religious duties... is the maintenance of Islamic society and its protection against internal and external aggression. Let us apply ourselves conscientiously to understanding the method by which these duties are to be discharged. Islam command us to fight for the sake of Allah. Is it possible that each individual believer may perform this duty alone and go to fight the enemies of Islam single-handed? Should every believer discharge his

duty in this fashion, can it be said that Islamic society as a whole has satisfied the religious requirement? No. There can be no jihad in the proper sense of the term, unless there are coordinated forces, a strong general mobilization, an orderly leadership, armies, war plans, and methods that nature and history have taught. In order to fulfill this duty, the individual must, at a certain age, give himself up to his state, which knows better than he himself how to utilize him for the best interest of jihad. If the believer performed this religious duty individually, the state would even fail in its own defense, and the individual could not guarantee his own safety. Similarly, the success of certain social welfare services necessitates the imposition of every kind of tax upon the individual--all of which would obviously be impossible without state rule and power..."

Islam is faith as well as acts, faith as well as a system. The duties of the state are clearly and precisely outlined in the Koran and the Sunnah. Where Islam is dispossessed of power, the greater part of its teaching remains as mere ink on paper because its observance is impossible through the efforts of individuals alone. Even the performance of personal religious duties would wither and eventually cease once the Islamic state was completely obliterated.

The state in Islam is not merely a utilitarian institution. The purpose of state rule is not only administration of justice and the maintenance of public services; it also includes certain religious duties that cannot be separated from the state machinery and routine. The caliph is leader in prayer as well as judge in court. As in modern practice the judge in court pronounces his verdict in the name of the head of the state, so should the imam in his mosque lead the prayer in the name of the head of state.

All the theological texts now available speak eloquently of the combination of both spiritual and temporal powers in the personality of the ruler, who is at once supreme commander, supreme judge, and supreme imam. It is only cultural imperialism and the domination of Christian powers that has separated them in our minds and in actuality.

The foregoing discussion is crystal-clear. Sheikh Khālid's claim that "guidance to virtue through self-discipline is the message of religion," or, in other words, that religion needs no state rule or power, is false. It is not

sufficient that some people may take this "guidance" to heart if they so desire. He states: "...Or like a prolonged highway at the beginning of which stand various informative signs about its direction, condition, and safety--such are the teachings of religion..." In other words, religion is, in Khālid's view, like the red and green traffic signals; it is supposed to guide man in the same mechanical way, but has no direct relation to government. Regarding Islam, such words are misleading and false. In Islam, the state has a tremendous task that occupies it both day and night. Islam regards it as the duty of the state to protect the faith and spread it at home and abroad, to apply its rules, to look after the believers, to bring up the new generations in true devotion to the faith and to employ the benefits of modern civilization in the service of Islam itself. The claim that religion is like the traffic sign, and hence has no need for state rule, is contradicted by the most ordinary facts. For unless backed by the state executive power, even the traffic signs would rarely be observed. The traffic policeman, traffic laws, and courts stand as visible evidence of our contention and easily refute Khālid's claim.

\* \* \* \* \*

Moreover Khālid's words are positively misleading. Who would be so bold as to contend that self-discipline and persuasion by argument constitute the pivot of reconstruction in public life--that the foundation and protection of public morals can be accomplished through this theoretical, mild, and ineffectual way? What society has at any time been successfully established upon a foundation so shaky? Obviously, under such a scheme, human nature being what it is, there is no place for government, authority, law, police, or for any of the other institutions so indispensable to man's progress.

Moral laws have never been able to do without sanctions and punishments. Counsel and advice never mean the closing down of courts and prisons. Long ago, 'Uthmān said: "God achieves through power what He does not achieve through the word."

Why should religion alone, of all institutions, be accused of exceeding the limits of its own nature when it seeks to do more than merely advise?

Many governments were established in the name of liberty, none of which allowed its citizens the liberty to do everything they pleased. Why should we allow the liberal governments to regulate and control, and deny the religious government the right to do likewise? Would a religious government be exceeding the limits of its nature if it sought to fight indecency and nudism on the seashores, for example, and took the steps necessary thereto?

Sheikh Khālid answers, "...But when these methods become the whip and sanction of state rule and power, virtue itself suffers seriously."

Such pronouncements must have a logic all their own!

## 16.

## Deliberate Errors

As personal character is transformed into actual conduct, as theoretical ideas are transformed into tangible realities, and as the programs described in books are transformed into the actualities of history, so is religion transformed into the state. This is an obvious fact that calls for no further evidence. Hence, Khālid's question: "What use has religion for the state? Is religion any less significant than the state so that it must transform itself into, or combine with, the state?" must be intended to mislead the reader.

It is a strange question indeed; for it presupposes the questionable premise that the transformation of an idea into action adversely affects the idea, as though the idea were forever doomed to remain a mere dream entertained by reformers in their silent moments. What evil is there in the idea's meeting with the means of execution, and in its transformation into a living program and an energetic state?

Taking his presuppositions for granted, Khālid further asks, "How can it be possible for religion to become a state when it is a body of eternal, inalterable verities and the state must evolve, change, and improve incessantly?"

Must religion's commandments remain unobserved in a dead society because the religious verities are eternal? If that were so, then the moral imperatives of truthfulness, honor, trustworthiness, and all other virtues that are no less eternal verities, should be excluded from government activity;

for their truth and validity are absolute, whereas the state is always evolving!

According to this logic, virtue would be excluded from the state, just as religion has been. Despite the fact that not only the state but also the whole of human life changes and is subject to the law of evolution and development, there are yet aspects of life which belong to another order. These are governed by deeply-rooted principles that are eternal; they have no beginning and no end. These decide what the relations of man to God and to other men shall be; they draw up the ideals mankind is to realize irrespective of any evolution or change that may befall human existence. Their absoluteness and title to honor is never questioned.

Nor do these eternal verities of religion and morals require renewal when men exchange their donkeys for airplanes!!

What is the connection of the evolving forms and methods of government--which are only means--with the ends in the spirit of which government is to be carried on.

Sheikh Khālid, however, goes on to further and still more erroneous ideas. "The state," he writes, "is exposed to criticism and vituperation, to defeat, colonization and even liquidation. How can religion be likewise exposed?" Thus, Khālid means to say that the costs and challenges of life are excessive, and hence, that it is better to condemn somebody to death and spare him these trials than to save him for them. He counsels us to exclude religion from the state in order to keep the former immune from the trials and risks of the latter. True, a government is always exposed to criticism and vituperation, but it does not follow that an attack upon the government is in itself an attack upon religion. Sheikh Khālid's missing premise is that the conduct of religious governors is part and parcel of religion itself; but this is utterly false.

It is also true that the state is subject to victory and defeat. Religion would keep the state from becoming a despotism in case of victory and would ignite within it the fire of resistance in case of defeat. Does truth become falsehood because it loses a battle? What shame would attach to religion if the state that defends it were to suffer defeat? Religion has been defeated before, and through its military defeats many moral teachers and prophets have perished.



"And how many a prophet," says the Koran, "has fallen and how many a saint has fallen with him; but the faithful never succumbed nor weakened nor lost hope on account of what they suffered for the sake of God."

We may therefore conclude, that the attempt to segregate religion from the state has failed because it is devoid of grounds.

## 17.

## Religious Government and the Opposition

Sheikh Khālid claimed that religious rule is founded upon blind despotism where "false pride, the worst instinct of religious government, is consecrated." He states, further: "Religious government cannot accept any advice or orientation from the outside. Opposition, criticism and the right to criticize, freedom of thought--all these things are forbidden and contraband. The same fate that befell al-Hussein awaits anybody who dares criticize the religious ruler or accuse him of wrong-doing. Likewise, the same Hadith, under the sanction of which al-Hussein's life was terminated, stands ready to sanction a repetition of that occurrence." Can we accept the statement that religious rule prospers in such foul atmosphere? One look at the teachings of Islam is sufficient to make anyone realize that Islam demands the creation of a benevolent and daring opposition, which allows no wrong to pass without criticism and measures every governmental act without bias or prejudice. Any generation of Muslims that fails in the duty of orienting and guiding the ruler, or correcting and chastising him whenever he errs, has thereby violated Islam itself. The Prophet has said, "If my people should ever fear to tell a despot: 'Thou, despot!' they might as well be dead and forgotten."

Opposition and resistance to despotic government to the very last breath is, in Islam, the highest and most worthy martyrdom possible. "The greatest of martyrs is Hamzah, who stood up against a despot and was killed by him."

Islam does not want a despondent, ignorant, and inactive society which is incapable of disciplining its rulers and therefore submits silently to their terror and injustice. Not only does it demand that the people rise against their bad

rulers, but it also defines and regulates the relations of rulers and ruled, and surrounds government with frontiers of justice, mercy, and benevolence that check the aberration of rulers to partisanship or tyranny. Furthermore, the government of any nation may at any time degenerate into a tyranny, and it makes no difference at all whether or not that nation is Muslim or Christian, Arab or Persian. Why then should Islam and Islamic rule alone be responsible for the conduct of despots and tyrants?

The Prophet said, "My people's greatest peril may come from a few youths from Quraysh..." Can we conclude from this, following the example of Sheikh Khālid, that the Prophet was actually criticizing the principle of religious rules itself, rather than its exemplification in Quraysh?

Islam considered the criticism of error and the fight against evil--whether perpetrated by a governor or a subject--as cardinal points of doctrine. However, it has taken care to safeguard both government and people against over-hasty revolts which often bring ruin and disaster to all concerned. The freedom to criticize is not the same as the freedom to revolt. In ancient times, disagreement with the sovereign did not mean anything other than a challenge to arms; but no one expects Islam to allow this kind of freedom to criticize in modern times. All that Islam has stated for the purpose of preventing civil war is this saying of the Prophet, "There may be setbacks; whoever seeks to divide this nation against itself shall be struck with the sword." This Hadith is beyond doubt or criticism. The most advanced constitutional governments act in accordance with it both in times of war and of peace. The right of armed revolt is not something readily available for any displeased citizen. On the other hand, to regard lawful opposition as a violation of religion and claim that this is the purpose of the above-mentioned Hadith, is a radical mistake.

The tyrants have killed many people and inflicted great sufferings upon many more; but in this they followed their despotic passions, not the teachings of God. It does not behoove us to forgive these criminals on the grounds that they were trying to act according to the Koran and the Hadiths, for they honored neither the one nor the other.

## 18.

## Between Religious Rule and National Rule

Here is a question that must be answered at the outset of our discussion of the relation between religion and state: Can Islam live and prosper under nationalist rule? The answer is derived from the teachings of Islam. In the economic field, for instance, Islam prohibits usury and monopoly; in the political it prohibits despotism and tyranny; in the moral, it prohibits disbelief and corruption. Islam, further, demands that its men, both shepherd and flock, observe prayer and the other commandments of God. If the state carries out this teaching in its entirety, Islam will live securely therein, and it will not matter whether that state is called nationalist or religious. The important matter is that Islam has ideals which must be realized, and upon the state falls a great portion of this obligation.

If, on the other hand, the desired nationalist state is not concerned with the political, economic, social, and moral teachings of Islam and gives the Islamic civil and criminal law no place, then that state is utterly irreligious, and it is impossible to expect Islam to accept it.

No Muslim is under obligation to respect such a government. On the contrary, Islam demands of Muslims who live under such a regime to fight it to the end and institute, in its place, a government that actually observes the teachings of Islam and strives to realize its ideals.

It is noteworthy that the present constitution of Egypt provides for the rule of a wise Islamic government. It is to disbelief, rather than to faith, that we should impute the crime of attempting to overthrow the form of government. Constitutional continuity is an important factor contributing to the realization of Islamic ideals.

## 19.

## Should Islam Be the Victim of These Falsifications?

The program of Islam is clear in the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Prophet. Its light has shone in the world for many long centuries. Its history is far more illustrious than

that of other religions and is richer than that of contemporary world civilization--granted that every religion and civilization must have its fluctuations, its more or less flourishing periods. Despite all these facts, Sheikh Khālid decided, after a quick glance at the afflictions brought about by certain individuals, to derive from such evidence the conclusion that the religion of God is to be trusted no more. His mistake is threefold:

- \* a. He has compared the history of the Mosque with that of the Church, a parallel no historian has ever accepted. Neither the Western orientalist nor the Christian missionaries have dared strike a parallel between Christian priesthood and the Muslims in their attitude towards science and culture. The validity of this fact is not affected by Sheikh Khālid's discovery that, deep in the desert, a certain sheikh ordered geography to be exchanged for theology in the school curriculum, or that a certain Saudi or Yemenite governor had an aversion to the radio or the telephone. World history is not constituted of the idiosyncrasies of the stupid and the ignorant; these cannot be a hindrance to Islam.
- b. Sheikh Khālid confuses the requisites of true religion with the effects of corrupt religiosity. Granted that a certain group clamored, in the name of religion, that woman must be locked up in her home without education or instruction, is this sufficient evidence to conclude that religion may never exercise any power or authority? Following this line of reasoning, Khālid formulated, out of the long list of tyrants' crimes and mistakes, an argument by which he sought to separate religion from state. It is really strange that Islam should be responsible for those who pretend to be Muslims though their conduct is criminal. Modern civilization, on the other hand, is not held responsible for what England did in Palestine, Italy in Libya, France in Syria and Lebanon--for what Russia did with the Muslims, Germany with the Jews, the United States of America with the negroes.

- c. Further, Sheikh Khālid told stories known by everybody concerning the terror under which the Saudi Arabians live, and called this dismal picture "Religious Government --1950 Model". When he realized that many so-called civilized nationalist governments have been guilty of the same thing and, hence, that religion cannot be the common root, he said: "...But the nationalist government that goes

astray cannot live long. Behind it stands a public opinion powerful enough to force it out of office sooner or later. In the case of religious government, on the contrary, all authority goes back to it; it can admit neither criticism nor opposition."

According to Khālid's reasoning, a certain kind of authority is dubbed "religious" when it has no relation to religion save the name, and religion is then said to approve of such rule, however opposed it may be to it by nature. And from these premises it is concluded that religion should exercise no power. Such are the steps of the ridiculous reasoning that supposedly leads to the separation of religion and state. We shall add more to this when we expose the shameful effects of nationalist rule in some modern democracies. For the moment, let the reader judge for himself the merits and logic of Khālid's reasoning.

20.

#### A Return to the First Jahiliyah

With the weakening of the Islamic state, the corruption of government under an ignorant, sickly caliphate and an oppressed, indifferent people, and with the dismemberment of the great Islamic homeland by a crusading Europe, a number of movements arose that aimed at reform.

Some of the greatest men who gave themselves to the re-establishment of a sane Islamic rule and a Koran-observing society are Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, Muhammad 'Abduh, Aḥmad 'Arābī, Hassan al-Bannā, Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibi--all of whom regarded the Muslims of the world as one body and their various afflictions as one common evil. Their work was directly inspired by the Book and the Sunnah.

Apparently the circumstances these leaders faced were more unfavorable than they thought. Or, more exactly, the circumstances were too adverse for their weak nation to overcome. This is why they were able to realize but a small portion of their dream.

The task was much easier for the other kind of leaders, who took Europe as their model and acted on the principle that to imitate her was the sure way to reconstruction. Whether they knew it or not, these leaders were no better

than the donkey loaded with sponges who, in imitation of his salt-loaded companion, sought vainly to lighten his load in crossing the river.

Nationalism was our most important imitation of the West. We made everything dependent on it in the construction of the modern state. Every day a leader of Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Iraq, Hejaz, Libya, or some place else, preaches this sort of madness. Every tiny Muslim state actively seeks its own independence or the protection of its own narrow frontiers. Yet, none of them has been successful. Nationalism has only lost for us our Islamic unity and enabled Christian, and then Zionist imperialism to rob us of our most sacred rights.

Even this is not all. The truth is that every growth of nationalism, racialism, and infidel patriotism is a loss of Islamic faith as well as a loss of Islamic rule. The revival of such evil fanaticism is a plot against God's religion--a return to the first Jahiliyah with all its injustice and crime. The achievements of Mustafa Kemal in Turkey and the nationalist achievements of Egypt and other Arab and Islamic countries are all worthless. Sheikh Khālid's endorsement of nationalist rule without Islam is truly a grave mistake.

21.

#### The Nature of Islam

Islam is a body of general principles valid for all, irrespective of race, color, or nation. It is a gift from God --"Lord of the people, King of the people, God of the people"--to all mankind. It is based on the conviction that God alone is king and lord in a realm where no difference separates an Arab and a Persian, where His word is law and His will is reality, where all believers are equal, and where there are neither tyrants nor dictators, neither philosophers of power nor advocates of terror.

Are we going to discard this great religion for the delirious ravings of impostors and tyrants who rob whole peoples of their rights? Are we going to exchange the better for the worse?

How can we give up Islamic rule for the sake of nationalist rule, and thereby forsake our message and happiness and

confound ourselves with the lowly and the ignorant?

The nationalistically minded person is to the Islamically minded as a wretched fellah [peasant] to a world-statesman. How different are their minds and outlook! To persist in this nationalist trend is folly. "Whoever fights blindly for a fanatic cause," said the Prophet, "will perish for his ignorance."

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Modern times have seen the rise of universalist doctrines that are now driving out regionalism. The advocates of these new doctrines have forgotten their national problems. Only the issues of their vital and compelling theory occupy them. Community of principle comes before concern for the homeland. The American and English Communists oppose their own governments on the issue of their relation with Russia. If worldly philosophies are achieving such dominion over their adherents, how can the Muslims give Islam only a place of secondary importance? How can Islam give way to racialism or any form of nationalism?

The community created by Islam must come before any that is created through blood or homeland. It is a community of an idea, of an active conviction and of a surgent emotion, which comes before any other kind of community. No opposition to the judgment of the Koran is possible, and no question can be raised about the dictate of the Sunnah. Under the banner of the Koran and the Sunnah all men stand in one order of rank, whether they are Negroes, Saxons [sic], Hindus, Latins, Arabs, Persians, Africans, or Americans. None is superior to his brother except in virtue and the fear and love of God.

22.

#### The Muslim Loss from Nationalism

In Turkey, a miserable reactionary movement was started for the purpose of reviving Turkic nationality. It succeeded in dissolving the caliphate and separating religion from the state. What good did that do? Under Islam and the caliphate, the Turks inspired terror in their Russian neighbors, and for centuries they waged war on Russian soil. Today, Turkey

is a petty state that begs for its arms from America and lives in the orbit of the dissolute democracies. The Turks live under constant fear of the outside world and possess less than ten per cent of their former empire. To what good has their disbelief led them?

The Arabs too, under Islam, lived independently and enjoyed the respect of other peoples. But after their nationalism began to stir, and they allied themselves with the English against the Turks in order to establish a purely Arabian state, they became "refugees", enslaved by either the English or the Jews.

Strangely enough, the disease that almost led them to ruin is still active in their thinking, and its effects are still visible in their conduct.

We have witnessed the futile debate between Egypt, on one hand, and Iraq and Jordan, on the other, concerning Palestine; and we recognized the symptoms of that hideous pestilence, namely nationalism, in the angry words the delegates of these countries addressed to one another. Sheikh Sayyid Rajab, editor of "Nūr al-Islām", the al-Azhar magazine, once wrote: "'Al-Misri' newspaper has published an article by H.M. King Abdullah which seeks to spread doubt regarding the Arabism of Egypt. King Abdullah described the Egyptians as an African people devoid of any blood ties with the Arabs, and argued that therefore they do not have the right to call themselves Arabs--not to mention the right to be leaders of the Arabs. Sayyid Rajab answered as follows:

"The Arabian roots of Egypt run so deep in history that no Arab country has ever questioned them. Hagar, the mother of Ismā'īl [Ishmael], son of Ibrahim [Abraham] was an Egyptian woman and hence, every Egyptian must be an uncle to every Arab.\* This relationship on the mother's side is further consolidated by one on the father's, created by the first conquering Arabs. Moreover, Egypt had the additional honor of playing uncle on the mother's side to Ibrahim, son of the Prophet, whose mother was the Coptic woman, Mary. Which Arab land then can claim as much Arabism as Egypt?

"Despite this, we may not limit Arabism to those whose

\*That is, since the Arabs are the sons of Ismā'īl. \_\_\_\_ Tr.

parents or uncles were Arabs. The Arabicized Arabs are Arabs too--they form the solid base upon which Arabism stands. Ismā'il, son of Ibrahim, was not an Arab, but, like his father, a Hebrew. He was Arabicized through his Yemenite in-laws. The Arabicized Arabs have even surpassed the pure Arabs in virtue and Arabism..."

With these and other proofs Sayyid Rajab refuted King Abdullah's claims.

But, we ask, what is the point of this whole debate? Of what good are blood relations even if they existed? What does it matter whether we are Africans or Asiatics? Why is 'Abd Shams superior to Tut Ankh, or Tahtamis to Antar? Why do we not say instead that the Muslim negro is superior to the Hashemite impostor? that Palestine is the concern of Islam and the Muslims before being that of Arabia and the Arabs? Why do we not repeat after the great Prophet: "Let those who boast of their dead ancestors give up their futile game; for their fate is the doom of hell. All men are children of Adam, and Adam was created on earth."

## 23.

## An Original Constitution and Subsidiary Laws

Wherever Islamic rule is established, it must be based upon the following truths, or doctrines:

The world has but one master unto whom all reverence, all love and all obedience is due; He is the one great God. All peoples are one single nation. No origin, race, color, or country shall differentiate them. Their superiority to one another lies only in the spheres of morals and of achievement.

The sole lawgiver is God. No man shall legislate for or judge another. Human beings are all one in their submission to divine authority. There is no exception to this, whatever the extent of a person's worldly excellence and fame may be.

Divine revelation is the basis of justice in the affairs of state and society. Where there is no justice, there is neither revelation nor divine law. "God sent down the Book in justice and measure." "We have sent our prophets with evidence, with the Book and the scale that men may mete out justice to one another."

There are in Islam many subsidiary laws, none of which is superior to the others. They are all meant to bring Islam to power and consolidate its dominion in the state.

There are other verses and Hadiths. Some deal with personal matters like marriage, divorce, inheritance. Others are concerned with such business matters as trade, rent, partnership, competition. Others cover such criminal affairs as punishment, blood money, and moral and social offences like theft and adultery. Then there are those which regulate economic matters generally--usury, monopoly, and the like--while others deal with political disputes, revolutions, the caliphate, and so forth.

Worldly affairs are many and diverse. The Sharī'ah [law] has given us some definite texts and absolute principles, which we cannot here cite without involving ourselves in the task of presenting at least one half of the whole of Islam. Let then whosoever wishes refer to the original books of theology and learn therefrom the elements of Islamic law.

By the foregoing--and these are only a few subsidiary tenets of Islam--we have meant simply to expose the false claims. The central core and original spirit of Islam imply internationalism and union of state and religion; both of these derive from the central tenet of monotheism. The conviction that God is one is the pivot of a political and social world policy that seeks to realize justice and fraternity.

## 24.

## Obstinacy

To doubt a self-evident fact is an idle matter.

Suppose a person has formed the idea that Churchill, the English statesman, is a speaker and a man of letters only, and that his whole life has been spent in those pursuits. Suppose also, this person believed that Churchill knows nothing of politics and has never been active in this field. Suppose this same person were told that Churchill was born and raised in politics, that he went through two great wars and set the countries of the world against one another, that his judgment has left many obvious marks on the history of England. Now, if such a man contended that Churchill is

not a statesman, and in support of his contention argued that circumstances alone led Churchill to wage wars, negotiate treaties, promulgate laws and perform the statesman's duties--could that man be regarded seriously?

Our friend Khālīd would answer in the affirmative, for he believes that the Prophet's duties and the task of religion are precisely "prophethood, not power; guidance, not rule. ... It is true that the Prophet negotiated and signed political treaties, led armies and enjoyed all the manifestations of power. It is true that some of his caliphs established great and powerful governments. But all this in no way implies that there is a special form of government that religion regards as its indispensable instrument..."

Why, then, did the Prophet exercise power, legislate, and rule in person or through delegates?

"It was social circumstances," says Sheikh Khālīd, "that led the Prophet to seek the welfare and happiness of his new community." Is it true that local needs forced the Prophet to rule? And that he would never have legislated, administered justice or signed treaties were it not for these pressing needs? To answer in the affirmative would be a great error. It was God, not the so-called "circumstances", that prescribed the Prophet's duty and made worldly rule an integral part thereof. "We have sent thee the Book so that thou mayst administer justice in accordance with God's prescription..." God has severely condemned the people of the Book who refused to submit to the judgment of the Koran when they were called upon to do so. God's requirement that the people take their disputes to the Prophet removes all doubt that he came only to administer spiritually. God said: "Hast thou not observed those unto whom part of the scripture was given? They were called unto the Book of God that it might judge between them: Then some of them turned their back and retired afar. This they did because they said, the fire of Hell shall by no means touch us but for a certain number of days: and that which had falsely devised hath deceived them in their religion." In another surah, God says: "And when they are summoned before God and His apostles that He may judge between them, behold a part of them retired; but if the right had been on their side, they would have come and submitted unto him. Is there an infirmity in their hearts? Do they doubt? Or do

they fear lest God and his apostles act unjustly towards them? But themselves are the unjust doers. The saying of the true believers, when they are summoned before God and His apostles, that He may judge between them, is no other than that they say, We have heard, and do obey."

Is the foregoing the language of a religion that considers government an accident? What would Sheikh Khālīd say regarding God's condemnation of those who refuse to be judged by Islamic law, as when He says: "And by the Lord they will not perfectly believe until they make Thee judge of their controversies and shall not afterwards find in their own minds any hardship in what Thou shalt determine, but shall acquiesce their aim with entire submission."

The truth is that God laid down the law in His Book and commanded the Prophet to execute, and us to obey, the divine ordinances. He regarded the discarding of these revealed laws as ungodliness, injustice or perversion, according to the circumstances accompanying the deed. Since such is the prestige of the revealed laws, they must be part and parcel of religion itself, not of the world. This can be inferred from the Hadith, "You know better the affairs of your own world," which Khalid has quoted out of context. This Hadith actually tells the Muslims that the Prophet has not come to this world to teach the people the methods of agriculture, industry, or trade. According to Muslim, the anecdote relative to the Hadith is the following: The Prophet came to Medina while the people were pollinating the date trees. He inquired what they were doing. They answered that they were doing something they were accustomed to do. Upon this, he commented: "Why is it not better that you leave it undone?" Unable to answer, they stopped pollinating and the result was the total loss of the fruits. When he was asked to account, the Prophet said: "I am only a man. If I command you something concerning your religion, take it and obey it; but if I should command you something else of my own opinion--well, I am only a man..." What relation is there between this Hadith--now that we know the circumstance occasioning it--and the laws revealed not only to our Prophet alone, but to many other prophets before him as well? The Torah, the Gospels, and the Koran demanded, whether in letter or in spirit, that the Prophet execute the law.

## 25.

## The Founder of a State

So much for the internal affairs of the state and the role religion must play in them. We shall now direct our attention to the state's foreign policy and the attitude the Prophet took towards the problems it presented. We shall find that the Prophet laid the foundation for an Islamic rule which was to spread so far and wide as to envelop the whole world. As a matter of fact, Islam did spread over almost all of the world known at the time. Once the preparations, psychological, military, and otherwise, for this great undertaking were completed, the Prophet asked the contemporary kings to accept the new faith. But these monarchs had deified themselves, had exploited their peoples and sapped them of their strength. The Prophet's message was the warning preceding the war of liberation and salvation. Thus, the Prophet of God educated the Arabs in order to educate, through them, the whole world. He fought their Jahiliyah in order to fight, through them, the Pharaonism, Chosroism, and Caesarism that enveloped the world; he destroyed their stone idols in order to destroy, through them, idols of false glory and give the exploited nations an opportunity to live freely under one God and as one brotherhood.

It was God alone who defined this purpose to the Prophet. Regarding this matter, Muslim told the following: "God looked upon the world and was displeased with all men--Arabs and non-Arabs alike--except a few from among the people of the Book. He then said to Muhammad: 'We have sent thee as a blessing and given thee an imperishable Book which thou canst read asleep or awake.' God then commanded the Prophet to destroy Quraysh; and when the Prophet answered that Quraysh might destroy him, He said: 'Force them as they have forced thee; conquer them, and we shall conquer through thee; spend and we shall spend to thee; send out an army, and we shall send another five times stronger; fight the infidels with the help of those who obey.'"

Truly, the wars of conquest were in perfect accordance with Islam's constitution and nature. Islam does not meet aggression with a silent protest; nor does it allow other peoples to suffer under their despots and merely shed its

tears over their fate. Were Islam guilty of that, it would not deserve the name of "religion", nor would its Prophet be the greatest of all leaders. The great Prophet began building a state that would adopt the right cause everywhere and defend it against the tyrants of the earth. As soon as he was able to order the people in lines for prayer at the mosque, he led them in ranks on the battlefield. He inspired his companions with hope and convinced them that this new state would soon spread over the whole world and inherit Byzantium and Persia. In the Hadith reported by Muslim, the Prophet said: "God has saved the world for me; I saw its frontiers on East and West. To my people shall fall all that belongs to me..." "There will be no Chesros after Chesro, nor Caesars after Caesar. By God, you will spend their treasures for the sake of Allah." It was with this conviction and faith that the Islamic armies marched. The first act performed by the first caliph was the saving of Usamah's army for the war with Byzantium. As the armies of the faithful advanced, wave after wave, pagan aristocracy was destroyed. The Islamic kingdom was not built that Muhammad might wear a crown, or that his successors might live in glory. The Islamic state has no room for caesars or emperors. Its ruler is a leader whose official task is no different from that of the imam in his mosque.

Such a task is a duty performed for the love of God. It implies neither pride nor self-glorification.

## 26.

## A Difference between Two Governments

Sheikh Khālid wrote, "The Prophet was not anxious to play the role of governor because prophethood is far nobler and superior"--which is certainly not true. That the Prophet did actually govern is unquestionably true; no historian has ever doubted it. Even Professor Khālid has acknowledged it. However, he attributed it to the dictates of the prevailing circumstances. But that the Prophet was actually anxious for power is the inescapable consequence of the divine dictate directed to him. It was God who commanded: "Thou shalt administer justice according to God's revelation, and thou shalt not follow their desire when the right is in question."

"We have brought the law to thy knowledge. Thou shalt observe it and avoid the wishes of those who do not know."

As to the contention that worldly rule is inferior in dignity and worth to prophethood and that the Prophet's discharge of governmental duties is detrimental to him in respect to his prophethood--that really depends upon our conception of world-rule and the method of obtaining and using it.

Not only the Prophet, but even we who are far below him, should refrain from seeking power if power is to be used as a means for personal or partisan advantage, for false pride or corruption. Apparently Sheikh Khālid knows only the oriental pasha's kind of rule--the rule through which all those who start as paupers become laden with riches. But the world has known and will continue to know men of principles and ideals who lose themselves in their office and untiringly serve their people. Such rule is a kind of self-sacrifice and jihad.

Joseph, son of Jacob, sought and obtained the position of minister for state finances and provisions. Did he do this in order to become "His Excellency, Joseph son of Jacob"? Likewise, Khālid ibn al-Walīd became commander of the army. Did he do this in order to become "Field Marshall Khālid Pasha" and wear countless decorations and medals? The truth is that the former sought the position in which he could be of the best service to the people, and the latter sought the position through which he could bring victory more near. Both were the servants of God, anxious only to serve Him, whether as rulers or ruled.

Power is a great means for achievement in this world, and its possessors rejoice in it for their righteous principles, not for the advantage of their persons. The Prophet sought only this kind of power, and so did the wise Orthodox Caliphs after him, as do men of principle in every time and place. On the other hand, those who seek power for personal benefit or in satisfaction of a private ambition are far removed from the religion of God. Such people will be eternally damned.

### Religious Rule and Two Peoples

The Jews had allowed usury, bribery, and adultery to spread among their people, and particularly among their monarchs and leaders. They abolished God's commandments by neglecting certain texts and misinterpreting others to suit their purpose. Their promises to God had all been broken. In His anger against their conduct God said: "Wherefore because they have broken their covenant, we have cursed them and hardened their hearts; they dislocate the words of the Pentateuch from their places and have forgotten part of what they were admonished."

The Jews continued to violate the divine commandments and adopt more and more lax laws until their political structure, the religious state, crumbled to pieces. When the Prophet came, he found the laws of the Torah discarded. It so happened that when a certain married Jew committed adultery, his people wanted to let him go free, with but little punishment. The Prophet argued with them until they acknowledged that the law of the Torah prescribed stoning for such a crime. Thereupon, the Prophet said, "O Lord, I am the first to assert your command whenever they deny it." He then ordered the culprit to be stoned. But when the Jews continued to neglect His laws, God destroyed their kingdom, dispersed them and allowed them to fall under the tutelage of the believers.

\* \* \* \* \*

God has spared our nation in order to see what it can do. He has given us the Koran as a basis for religion and state, and, therein, laws regarding the faith, society, and politics. On many consecutive pages of one surah can be read God's words: "Your duty is to punish;" "Your duty is to fast...;" "Your duty is to fight..." How can this nation discard certain duties while it observes others--such as fasting--with great pomp and officiality?

When the Jews did this very thing, the Koran asked: "Would you then believe some part of the Book and disbelieve another?... What reward can you then expect unless it be shame and disgrace?"



Surely a nation endowed with a message must suffer punishment whenever it abuses or discards its legacy. The Prophet warned against our relinquishing the political manifestations of Islam. Whenever vice appears among a people, new ills, unknown to their ancestors, spread among them likewise; whenever a people cheat in measurement, they will suffer famine and the oppression of a tyrant; whenever they abstain from giving alms to the poor, they will suffer drought; whenever they break the covenant of God or His Prophet, they will suffer a foreign enemy's gaining possession of some of their goods; and whenever their sovereigns do not rule in accordance with the Book of God, they will suffer misery.

What reason do we have to regard ourselves as dearer to God than all those nations He has obliterated on account of their abuse of religion? Why do we not say with boldness that this Western imperialism which has lacerated the Islamic state is the consequence of that state's being a body devoid of spirit, a body disfigured by its own people who observed no law and respected no commandment? How can a state subsist when its citizens are the first to sap its foundations? We shall allow Sheikh Sayyid Rajab to compare the Jewish and Islamic peoples and Jewish and Islamic prophethood; we quote freely from his excellent article in "al-Isrā'":

"Thus, Moses gave his advice to Muhammad. To give counsel to a successor is precisely what is expected of a leader; for the new prophet must have the advantage of his predecessor's experience and thus prepare himself for his preordained task.

"As soon as we have read the opening verses of the surah, al-Isrā', we come upon the stories of Moses, the Torah, and the people of Israel, which are many and diverse. In this surah we have a story with a perfectly clear purpose that can be read between the lines. The subject is 'Religion and Power', and the story tells how God gave them both together to the Jews (as He has given them to us together). The Torah is at once religion and state, and the Koran likewise. It is God's law that whenever a nation is granted both religion and power, that nation can either preserve both or lose both; that whenever it seeks the one rather than the other, it must perforce lose each of them. This is the wise

lesson the surah has taught. Let us now hear the Koranic text: 'Praise be unto him who transported his servant by night from the sacred temple of Mecca to the farther temple of Jerusalem, the circuit of which we have blessed, that we might show him some of our signs; for God is He who heareth and seeth.'

\*Then what? One might expect that there would be mention of further verses in detail, or at least some hint of them, and that much or little of what the Prophet saw on his journey would be related. For he saw strange and wonderful things, as we know from other sources. But not at all! The heart of the matter is essentially greater than these stories--it is the whole of religion. (The authority of Islam is for ever and ever, from Muhammad until the Day of Judgment.) The Koran therefore sums up these verses and proceeds quickly to the main, and far more important, idea, namely: the preparation of the way, the explanation of the plan, the warning against failure to carry it out, and the recognition of the consequences of failure together with the punishment it would incur. This is all clearly revealed in the following verses, which we shall give first in their original form and then in paraphrase:

"And we gave unto Moses the book of law and appointed the same to be a direction unto the children of Israel, commending them, saying, Beware that ye take not any other patron besides me. O posterity of those whom we carried in the ark of Noah! Verily he was a grateful servant. And we freely declared unto the children of Israel in the book of law, saying, Ye will surely commit evil in the earth twice, and ye will be elated with great insolence. And when the punishment threatened for the first of those transgressions came to be executed, we sent against you our servants, indued with exceeding strength in war, and they searched the inner apartments of your houses; and the prediction became accomplished. Afterwards we gave you the victory over them, in your turn, and we granted you increase of wealth and children, and we made you a more numerous people, saying, if ye do well, ye will do well to your own souls; and if ye do evil, ye will do it unto the same. And

\*The quotation from Sheikh Sayyid Rajab's article presumably continues to the end of the chapter, but the punctuation of the Arabic text does not necessarily make this clear. --Editor's note.

when the punishment threatened for your latter transgression came to be executed, we sent enemies against you to afflict you, and to enter the temple, as they entered it the first time, and utterly to destroy that which they had conquered. Peradventure your Lord will have mercy upon you hereafter; but if ye return to transgress a third time, we also will return to chastise you; and we have appointed Hell to be the prison of the unbelievers. Verily this Koran directeth unto the way which is most right, and declareth unto the faithful, who do good works, that they shall receive a great reward; and that for those who believe not in the life to come, we have prepared a grievous punishment."

Hast thou heard? Hast thou understood? "Thou I address, but thou, O neighbor, I mean!" The story tells of the people of Israel, but it is really directed to us. It purports to say this: You are the successors of Israel in religion and power. The Jews had a religion whereby God preferred them to all other peoples. They had such power and glory under Solomon, the son David, as no one else will ever achieve. God stood by their side and protected them as long as they stood by Him, followed His ways and fulfilled their covenant with Him. But when they went astray, disobeyed Him, disbelieved and neglected His commandments, He withdrew His protection and care and gave them up to their own wild passions. Then the nations destroyed and trampled upon them. Babylonians, Egyptians, Persians, Romans--all these God sent to put them to the sword, and to humiliate and disperse those who were left.

Beware then of following their example. If you do so, God's law will apply to you with equal severity and consistency.

This is the moral of the first story in the surah "al-Isra'", and if you understand what has been said, you will know that the true wisdom in "al-Isrā'"\* and "al-Mi'rāj"\*\* is the celebration of the end of prophethood and prophecy in the world, and the investiture of Muhammad, the last of the Prophets, with the religious and civil authority of Islam under the banner of the Koran. It is the unification of religious legacies into Islam and under its standard until the Day of Judgment, and its proclamation by angels, messengers,

\*The night journey of Muhammad to Jerusalem.

\*\*His ascension from Jerusalem to heaven. \_\_\_\_ Tr.

and prophets to all people in heaven and on earth.

In addition to this matter of grave import, there is yet an even more important one that the story attempted to express; namely that God's legacy has been taken away from the people of Israel once and for all. Whatever state or power they may achieve or that may be achieved for them will be that of the devil or the "false messiah". And this is an established fact.

Religious leadership with banner, book, law, and power falls only to those prophets possessed of superior will. Prophethood was terminated with Muhammad, and the Koran -- with its wisdom, law, and grace--remains the end-all of religion to the Day of Judgment. Such is God's decided work and accomplished promise.

Should this be doubted, there remains the fact that no book or prophet ever declared the termination of prophethood and prophecy before the Koran and Muhammad. Prior to Muhammad, every prophet announced who was to succeed him. Only the Koran made such a clear and bold declaration of this eternal fact: "Muhammad will not be father to any of your people, but the prophet of God and last of the prophets."

About fourteen centuries have passed since then, and no prophet has appeared. The longest period separating any two prophets was that which separated Jesus and Muhammad --about six hundred years. The long centuries that have passed since Muhammad should have convinced the unbelievers of the truth. Muhammad proclaimed and the Koran recorded. If they still choose to persist in their unbelief, it should be told them that many more centuries will pass, yet they will succeed only in confirming the truth that Muhammad is "the Prophet of God and last of the prophets."

The attribution of eternity to Islam and the Koran does not mean that the Muslims shall enjoy everlasting life on account of their faith alone, should they neglect Islam, the Koran and the Shari'ah. Such is the wish of the perverse, a dream of the ignorant. Otherwise, there would be no sense in the stories God has told, nor to the warnings He has made, nor to the examples He has mentioned. God has done these things that we may escape the fate to which our negligence and disbelief are impelling us. The nations are trampling over us as they did over the Jews; they have enslaved us as they enslaved them. In fact, they have done against us more

than they did against the Jews--except that God has safeguarded Islam. The two greatest and strongest nations of the world disagree and quarrel on everything except enabling our enemies to exact contributions from us and humiliate us in our own land. That was the everlasting punishment for those to whom God gave religion and power, but who ungratefully broke His covenant and fulfilled not their promise.

We have no hope of salvation from these afflictions except through the means which God has approved in his books and through his prophets. The first and most important of these means is repentance--the return to God. Repentance is certainly not a matter of the tongue. Rather, it consists essentially of renouncing all our crimes and vice, of demanding pardon and resolving henceforth to walk forward on the path of virtue and reconstruction. The second means is the spiritual and material rehabilitation of the people with all our power, and in perfect faith in, and sincerity to, the wisdom God has kindly bequeathed to us. If we approve what He has approved, forbid what He has forbidden, follow His light and grace, and apply His Shari'ah, we may hope for His assistance and blessing. Nay, we may then be sure that His assistance and blessing are forthcoming, for they are promised in His Book--(If only we knew!)

This is our way out. We have delivered our message. O God, be our witness! "Grant us thy blessing and mercy that we may rightly discern in what we see."

## Chapter II

### THERE IS MORE THAN ONE HISTORY

How can the believer be like the unbeliever?  
That can never be!

Holy Koran

Some people become pessimistic when the subject of religious rule is proposed. Overhastily, they say, "Religious rule, really, is a mere object of fancy, and its pursuit is an idealist's dream." A comparison of events in history shows that the caliphs who ruled in the name of God were short-lived. After them, there came a long series of rulers who usurped the rights and liberties of the people and deified themselves and their children in the name of religion. This pessimistic group of students would assert, further: "There are not many rulers like abu-Bakr and Omar. The modern democratic systems have defined the rights of man in such detail that despots and tyrants would not be allowed to obtain power. To preach democracy and realize those rights is, frankly, far more profitable than giving our hearts to religious theories which, unfortunately, have never been clearly applied."

This, in brief, is the opinion of opponents of the Islamic movements in Egypt and elsewhere.

Their thinking is fundamentally erroneous. They are never tired of charging religion with all the mistakes, vices, and crimes imaginable. Granted that the history of man is nothing other than this dismal picture they present of him (the angels once asked God, "Would'st thou allow in the world evil men and murderers?"); still, the records of tyrants, despots and impostors cannot be attributed to God's religion. That the comparison may be fair, the modern theories advocated by reformers and taught by philosophers should be contrasted with religion as recorded in its holy scriptures, not as practiced by the so-called "men of religion".

Likewise, the comparison may be fairly made between religious rule as it has been practiced by its advocates, and democracy and communism as they have been put into practice by their actual proponents. These, and these only, are the elements that can be fairly compared with one another.

To compare religious rulers themselves with the theory of the French Revolution and the charter of the United Nations including the Security Council, is really to compare the incomparable.

We must compare men with men and theories with theories. But to answer those who are wont to attack religious rule in the persons of religious rulers, let us cast a quick glance at the democratic system as it was applied in our countries by its European advocates who came here to visit or to colonize. In all truth, those who had realized the democratic dream in their own lands or abroad have been guilty of far more hideous and barbaric conduct than many of the despotic rulers who governed in the name of religion.

The generation that France brought up after its revolution, which grew up on the catchwords of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and which redeemed countless Frenchmen from monarchical bondage--that generation came to the Orient in order to inflict upon its helpless peoples what the satanic kings of France inflicted upon their subjects, and even much more. The tragedies, butcheries, and shameless crimes of French colonization have left in our Muslim souls scars that will never heal. The same applies to the English, the Italians, and more recently, the Americans.

Following is a little classic of descriptive literature which the great English writer, George Bernard Shaw, wrote in an attempt to uncover the recesses and hidden crannies of the English soul:

#### English Democracy

Who is the Englishman?

He is a person who, when desiring a certain thing, never acknowledges, even to himself, that he desires it, but waits patiently until there flashes in his mind, through a means nobody can comprehend, a strong

conviction that his duty and high ideals absolutely demand that he conquer the state which is the object of his desire. Then nothing can stop him.

He is an artistocrat who does what he likes and sets his hand upon everything he may desire. But, at the same time, he is a member of the middle class. Like a shopkeeper, he pursues the object of his desire vigilantly and with perseverance. He consolidates his diligence with deep-rooted religious conviction and a deep feeling of responsibility.

He is never short of means by which to appear as a man of principles. He conquers and colonizes half the world and at the same time pretends that he is the greatest champion of liberty and independence. When he wants a new market for the foul goods of Manchester, he sends a missionary to preach the religion of Jesus to the natives of that market; and when the natives kill the missionary--which happens in almost every case--he draws his sword in defense of Christianity, fights for its sake, conquers in its name, and takes the market as if it were his god-sent reward!

In order to defend the shores of his island, he puts a Bible on top of his ship; he raises the flag with the cross on his highest pole; and then sails to the ends of the earth, destroying, burning, sinking, killing whoever challenges his mastery of the seas!

He boasts that the slave becomes free at the moment his feet touch British soil; but at the same time, he vends on that same soil his poor people's six-year-old children to work under the whip in his factories for sixteen hours a day.

He went through two revolutions for the sake of the rights of the people; but he went to war against the French Revolution for the sake of safeguarding international law and order.

Nothing is more hideous or more graceful than what he does. However, there is not one single Englishman who commits a mistake deliberately, for he always operates on principle. He goes to war against you on a nationalist principle; he robs you on a commercial principle; he enslaves you on an imperialist principle; he threatens you on a gallantry principle. Furthermore,

he supports his king on a loyalty principle but cuts off his head on a republican principle!

The keyword to his character is always: "Duty"!

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The reader will learn that the first Muslim conquerors were angels. He will also learn that Islamic rule, despite all its ills and mistakes, was still a blessing for the whole of mankind.

The reader will be further convinced of this truth, when he reads the foul story of those who carried European civilization to the known or unknown parts of the five continents. He will also realize that national rule is only a more vicious type of selfishness, and that the instincts of this ungodly kind of rule have filled the world with corruption and ignited the fires of enmity and hatred.

Finally, he will come to realize that the faction which works for the separation of Egypt from Islam is really a shameless, pernicious, and perverse group of European puppets and slaves.

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# 1.

## How the English Civilized India<sup>1</sup>

The amounts England has received from India during the last twenty-five years have been estimated at ten billion pounds, excluding the salaries and personal emoluments of the resident English employees. The period of time an English employee was allowed to spend in India was limited to five years as that was considered sufficient time to make him rich.

It is possible to gather an idea of the situation in India from the English writer, Mr. Hindman, who wrote, "It is really alarming that the northern provinces of India should be forced to export their grains to England whereas they

1. From "Al-Ḥaḍārah Al-'Arabiyyah" [La Civilisation Arabe], by Gustave Lebon.

have lost 300,000 of their sons from starvation within a few months." This English writer states further that in the year 1877, 935,000 people died in Madras district alone, according to official reports. All that England did was to enforce payment of the excessive taxes, thus making the situation even worse. The only justification we have heard for the annual subsidy that India paid to England--amounting to five hundred million pounds--is that of the "Fortnightly Review"; "It is the price of India's enjoyment of an orderly and peaceloving government."!! India may well scoff at this, especially in the light of the fact that the Indians dying of starvation every year outnumber the casualties of the greatest wars.

# 2.

## And How They Civilized China!

"There is a reason," said Gustave Lebon, "for every accusation of dishonesty and immorality the Orientals bring against us. The story of the relations between China and 'civilized' Europe in the nineteenth century shall fill the darkest pages in the history of civilization. Future generations may some day have to pay with their blood for the mistakes of these relations.

"What would our children of the future think of the opium war through which the English introduced that deadly poison to China by force of arms? Would they condone the English enforcement of its use after the Chinese national government had prohibited it?

"From the opium trade England derived a yearly profit of one hundred and fifty million pounds, but the yearly deaths caused by that drug were over six hundred thousand, according to the census of Dr. Christlippe.

"Is not the Chinese answer to the English missionaries who try to convert them to Christianity truly confounding? 'O perfidy,' they say, 'You give us poison with the intention to kill and then come to teach us moral virtue!'

"Apparently, however, the Chinese are not completely right in this last accusation. Do they not know that the Englishman is endowed with traditional enthusiasm for his generous support of missionaries and preachers who prepare

the Chinese for the other world to which they are sent with British opium and godspeed!"

## 3.

## A War of Extermination

The European principle that no savage people shall tread upon the earth has led to the extermination of whole groups of the human species.

The European emigrants hunted down the original inhabitants of America as if they were rabbits or some other wild game. The redskins have almost vanished as a result of the conquest of their hunting grounds and their concentration in arid zones which they cannot leave without losing their lives.

The natives of Australia and Tasmania have been completely exterminated.

The method used by the captains of English ships for supplying labor in the Malay Islands was to lure the natives craftily aboard the ships, and then kill them.

They would take their bodies to the chieftains of other enemy tribes and sell them for so many laborers a head, with the promise of returning the laborers after awhile--which, of course, they never did. The exchanged laborers would be made to work at sword's point for the rest of their lives.

Mr. Catterfage, the natural scientist, has said that the white man has no right whatever to criticize the most savage people's abuse of human life. The white man must review his own record in history and remember the wars he has waged and the stories he has written in blood. He must remember what he did with his more backward brethren and realize the destruction of which he has been the author. He must remember how he hunted men as though they were wild beasts; he must keep in mind how he exterminated whole nations in order to make room for colonizers of his own kind. He must recognize, if human life is at all sacred, that no people have ever desecrated it as he has done.

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In their international relations the democratic countries

have universally discarded as ridiculous every single principle of honesty and justice the world has ever recognized.

Every one of their movements, whether gentle or violent, is a calculated manifestation of their passions and ambitions. Throughout the history of the institutions these democratic countries have established, there has never been a single resolution that could be called honest in motive and purpose.

And as these countries have violated all rules of justice and virtue in their alliances, they have infringed upon every established right and liberty of the weaker nations.

There is France, the source of ideal constitutions! What we hear and see of her conduct in North Africa is positively ignoble and disgraceful.

Sayed Kotb has exposed some of these French crimes in an article from which we shall quote in part:

## French Democracy

The tragedy that French savagery is perpetrating at present in Morocco is not the first. It has been repeated many times over in Morocco itself, in Tunisia, in Algeria, in Lebanon, in Syria, in Indo-China, less recently in Cairo, and in every corner of the earth that French feet have desecrated.

It is France who fired her guns from the Qal'ah, desecrated with her cavalry the holy ground of al-Azhar in 1798, and bombarded Damascus in 1925 and 1941. It is France who did in Morocco in 1944 what she is doing today and much worse. Finally, it is France who has perpetrated in Algeria in 1945 crimes that would have put to shame even the Mongols and Tatars of the Middle Ages.

In May 1945, France destroyed forty-one whole villages in Algeria and killed every living soul therein, even women, children, and old men... It is not I who am saying this but the official report of the French Chamber of Deputies in its issue No. 57, of Thursday, July 12, 1945. It reads as follows: "The governor general of Algeria has answered a question directed to him in the common meeting of the committees for co-ordination of Islamic Affairs in the Ministry of the Interior... saying that forty-one villages have been bombarded from sea

and air and neither building nor animal was spared."

The French periodical, "Compas", described the butchery of May 1945, as follows: "Weapons of all kinds were distributed to the Europeans to such an extent that no woman or child was left unarmed. In one large city an Arab child under ten years of age stretched his hand towards a flower in the public garden. A French lieutenant immediately opened fire and killed him."

The correspondent of the daily, "Liberté"--that is to say, Liberty!--reported after the massacre:

"We are now in Heliopolis near the town of Qalima. The bodies of fallen Arabs have been lying on the streets for over five days; the authorities have deliberately neglected their burial in order to terrorize those who survived. This has succeeded in greatly increasing the hatred and enmity of the natives..."

The correspondent then went on to say: "In one place we saw a blood-covered baby looking for his mother's breast over her headless body. The infant was helpless and his mother could not answer her baby's cries..."

That is what the sons of France themselves say of the savagery of France... What, perhaps, do the slaves of France in Egypt and the Arab world say?

They do not say anything but hide in their holes like miserable rats--not out of shame, but out of fear of facing the rebelling conscience of the nation.

#### 4.

#### Blind Fanaticism

In the sixth issue of the thirty-third year of "al-Hilāl" [The Crescent], there appeared an article entitled "Why Turkey Joined the War", in which we read the following:

"Dr. Gustave Lebon wrote criticizing Turkey for entering the war on the side of Germany in 1914: 'Turkey had nothing to win from that war. Rather, she lost the Arab countries, Armenia, the Arabian Peninsula, Syria... and fell into a grave financial crisis.'

"A. Sani, Administrative Secretary for Beirut District, replied with a long explanation of the reasons for the Turkish alliance with Germany. He has shown that the Allies--

namely, England, France, and Russia--have always been anxious to destroy the Ottoman Empire, under the pretext of the Crusade, or the Eastern Question, and conquer whatever area they could cut off from it. In reality, their purpose was the reduction and limitation of Islam to smaller, dismembered parts, and the destruction of the state that has appeared in world history as its great representative. Hence it was imperative that the Turks join the Germans in a war which, for them, was one of life or death."

Dr. Gustave Lebon answered this article with the following letter:

Paris  
March 4, 1921

Dear Sir:

You are perfectly right in everything you have written. I shall try my best to publish your statements in a French daily newspaper, but I am not confident that I shall succeed in doing so...because our inherited Catholicism makes us one of the most fanatic enemies of the Muslims.

I have written a long book entitled "Arab Civilization" in order to prove that it is the Arabs who have civilized Europe...

Please accept my respects.

Dr. Gustave Lebon  
Paris  
28 Phenon Street

\* \* \* \* \*

This teacher cannot but acknowledge the hidden motives that make French colonialism such a terrible catastrophe. Certainly it is not the original Christian religion itself that inspires the infliction of suffering and misery upon the people, but rather, it is the barbarism of the Latin tribes and the utter ignorance of all those missionaries who masquerade in the name of Jesus. But Jesus--May God's peace be upon him!--is absolutely innocent of them and of their crimes.

## 5.

## ...And American Democracy

We cannot escape the fact that we have been greatly disappointed in the so-called American civilization. We were under the impression that a higher humanity had found its abode in America, the virgin land, and in its people whom covetousness had not yet corrupted. This impression had been further confirmed by the attitude of President Wilson in 1919 at the end of the World War. This man refused to join the states of Europe in their shameless treatment of the Orient. He came forth with noble principles for the regulation of world relations; but when the colonizing countries persisted in their vicious treatment of other nations, the Americans turned to isolationism.

Temptation and evil instincts, however, have gained the upper hand in the last few years. America has decided not only to take part in international robbery, but also to be its leader and star supporter. Thus the charm and mask were slowly cast aside, and we found ourselves facing a tragic situation wherein legal rights and interests as well as moral standards and ideals had been completely destroyed. The domestic as well as foreign policy of America is actually a systematic violation of every moral virtue humanity has ever known.

General activity in America is based entirely on the principle of utility. The mendacity and deception of advertisement and propaganda has reached fantastic heights. Morals have become a part of trade and are subject, like it, to the standards of profit and loss. Fraternity has proved to be a great lie, for racial war goes on everywhere on United States soil. It is the easiest thing for any group of men of the street to become murderers, assemble around a wretched negro, and enjoy the scene of his hanging from an oak tree for having committed the least offense. The direction of higher politics is in the hands of the Jews; hence international assemblies have, with their help, become markets where intrigues and conspiracies are bargained. The smaller nations are always the victims, and they have already despaired of ever having their voices heard in those assemblies.

After what we have witnessed of America's covetousness and imperialistic orientation, we assume that Wilson must have been expressing his own personal opinion, and that the nation over which he presided was far below him in moral standards.

Let the world be warned against the spreading American ways; to adopt the American way of life is to fall into a political and social enslavement from which liberation would be extremely difficult. We have previously succeeded in breaking other imperialist chains after a long and hard struggle, but no struggle would be great enough to liberate us from the American yoke once it had been imposed.

A great number of men whom the United States has injured agree that we should be apprehensive and that we must be careful. The editor of "al-Misri" [The Egyptian] has aptly described the domestic and foreign situation of America in the following article:

## Truman's Democracy

If President Truman expects to impose upon the world the kind of democracy practiced in America, he will be badly disappointed, for the world is not prepared to submit to a wretched dictatorship masked by empty superficialities and only called "democracy".

What does Truman want? And what does he seek to achieve?

Does he want to see the countries of the world deprive one-third of their peoples of the right to vote, as America does, so that the masters of Wall Street may be pleased?

Does he want to see the national governments persecute millions of citizens and put them in one concentration camp, the boundaries of which are the national frontiers, so that the Congressmen may be satisfied?

Does he want to see millions of citizens denied admittance to hotels, restaurants, and coffeehouses, so that they may not pollute the atmosphere in which the others exist?

Does he want to see millions of citizens refused admission to the universities? And if admitted by force of law, would he wish to see them segregated in public



lectures and classrooms so that the pretended democracy of the masters might be realized in full?

Does he want to see the countries of the world hang their minorities from trees without account or control as his own men do with the negroes?

What does Truman want? And what does he seek to achieve?

Does he want to see the whole world enslaved by the dollar? Or to see the whole world worship the dollar as the one great god so that American pockets may bulge even more?

Does he want to see the world suffer another world war which would destroy whatever civilization the previous one has spared? Is the President's materialism boundless? Does he understand only the language of atom and hydrogen bombs? Does he smell only blood and gunpowder?

Does he want to see the world persist in believing in this great deception of his own making so that whoever he does not like is ipso facto communist, an enemy of democracy, civilization, and the human inheritance?

Does he want to see the world accept American imperialism in economic and military spheres, together with his dictatorship, which is hardly surpassed by that of Hitler or Mussolini? If the world does not accept them, would he condemn it as communist, worthy of being destroyed?

President Truman seeks to achieve all this and much more. He wishes to sit in his White House, whose whiteness has become coal-black and whose noble and high ideals have been completely wiped out. From there he would command far and near places and have them obey.

What does Truman want? And what does he seek to achieve?

He surely wants all this; but he had better learn that he will not achieve it, that his star--at least in the corner in which Egypt and her Arab sisters live--has set once and for all.

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If, in observing the greatest of the so-called democratic states perpetrating such sinister crimes, we lose hope and

break our hearts, nonetheless the memories of a distant past stir within us and bring forth great, shining pictures of the incomparable golden age of the state founded by mankind's great leader, Muhammad ibn-Abdullah. Only that state has succeeded in stamping out all differentiations of race and color. The Prophet once said of a Persian, "Sal-mān is one of us, the owners of the house." He appointed Balala, the Abyssinian, muezzin, whose duty it was to call from the Kaaba the Muslims to prayer.

His state also included 'Abādah ibn-al-Šamat, a negro, as chief delegate of the Arabs to the Persians. The greatest jurists and theologians were non-Arab Muslims.

The state founded by the Prophet is the only state of which the constitution has demanded absolutely complete fulfillment of all promises agreed upon between two parties of different religion and race. And when the Jews said: "We shall not follow the road of internationalists, that is, we may attack the Gentiles and not hold ourselves to blame."--The Holy Koran answered: "And they say, in full consciousness, 'Never mind a lie.' Yea! He who fulfills His promise and fears God is beloved of God." In fact, in its respect for promises, Islam went so far as to discard the tie of common religion where it conflicted with the fulfillment of a promise. "And if thy brethren in religion call thee for assistance, thou shalt go out to help them unless thou art bound to their enemies by covenant."

Those who call for help are here the Muslims, and the treaty is with non-Muslims. Observe how the Islamic state upholds ideals while the modern democratic state upholds opportunism!

The modern world is in dire need of a truly religious and noble state that would use its strength for doing justice and undoing evil.

The world today belongs to the bearers of the Koran--to the nation of Muhammad, whose legacy consists of social and political virtues.

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Those who criticize religious rule, who fear a return to it, and who attack its representatives from a political and spiritual standpoint, should divide their forebodings fairly between the forms of government based upon a sound foundation and those that went astray.

We do not attack a system as such, nor do we blame human nature for its passions and weaknesses. But we say: The corrupt and evil application of democracy by its followers does not justify the return to the rule of one person. The right orientation is that directed to the correction of democracy's mistakes.

On the other hand, all that has soiled the reputation of religious rule, namely, the corruption and injustice of tyrants and despots, does not justify our renunciation of religion, or its separation from the state. In all truth, if we set down in the ledger the profits that have accrued to us from religion and the losses from the mistakes of religious rulers, we shall find the profit greater than the loss, for religion saved the legacy of man and oriented his culture and civilization towards a worthy ideal.

The spread of Islam beyond the limits of the Arabian Peninsula liberated Egypt, Syria, and Persia, and filled extensive portions of the earth with prosperity and virtue. This was achieved despite the mistakes of Muslim rulers.

But the spread of liberty beyond the boundaries of France, for example, has transformed every unfortunate land it reached into a colony of slaves. How many men and women have perished in Africa and Asia in their attempts to win back their liberty from the French representatives of liberty!

Like a high ideal, religion remains clear and well-defined. If we fail to attain it, we can still stand below it, fully conscious of our failure. To annul religion is to destroy the lighthouse of perfection and to envelop the world with darkness.

The attempt to place religion on the losing side by striking an artificial comparison between the conduct of Turkish sultans and Arab despots on one hand, and on the other, idealistic principles that are nothing but ink on paper, is false, and should not mislead anyone.

### Chapter III

#### ISLAM BETWEEN ITS ADVOCATES AND ENEMIES

Rabf'ah, my professor, once asked me, "O Malik, who are the canaille?" I answered, "They are those who revile their own religion." He then asked, "Who are the lowliest of these?" I answered, "They are those who seek to improve the lives of others by their own irreligiousness."

Malik ibn-Anas

A supper that I have earned is far better than one give to me on credit.

al-Faḍl bin 'Abbās

#### 1.

#### Devotion

In conveying their divine message all the prophets have taken care to assure people that they expect no reward for themselves in this world; rather, that they came to give, not to receive; that, as is to be expected from all men of principle, they came to sacrifice self and kin for the sake of the cause.

God has related to us the life-stories of these prophets, one after the other. Thus, we heard Noah say to his people: "Will ye not fear God? Verily I am a faithful messenger unto you: Wherefore fear God, and obey me. I demand no reward of you for my preaching: I expect my reward from no other than the Lord of all creatures."

This same assurance has been given time and again, in word, meaning, and motive, by Hūd to the people of 'Ad, by Ṣālih to Thamūd, by Loth to his people, by Shu'ayb to Madyan, by Moses to the Pharaohs. The Prophet too has often

repeated the verse: "Say, I ask not of you any reward for my preaching; it is your own, either to give or not; my reward is to be expected from God alone; and He is witness over all things."

The immediate intention of this saying is the purification of the religious message from all worldly cravings and ambitions, and the absolutely candid conveyance of the truth. The second purpose is to assure the public that what they own is theirs, and that the Prophet's exhortations to religion and God are no means or artifice to take their properties away from them.

Those to whom prophecy has fallen, whether merely in preaching or in both this and worldly rule, have always been mindful of this truth. They never regarded religion as a means for profit. The Islamic "Bayt al-Māl" [national treasury] may have allocated, in the past, certain salaries to the caliphs, judges, and preachers. But such salaries were mere subsistence allowances designed to fill the offices while the search continued for men who would perform these functions for the sake of Allah.

From a purely religious point of view, the world would not suffer in the least from remunerating those who organize its affairs honestly and efficiently, if such remuneration were not to exceed the requirements of subsistence and decent living.

To those who work for the sake of Allah, salaries and wages are no "price" or "reward" for their services. It is only proper for the "mujāhid" [soldier in a holy war] and the preacher to consecrate their services entirely to God, not to expect any remuneration therefor, and not to fear, in their work, any ruler or opponent. Such spiritual leaders should refuse the comforts and luxuries that may surround them; they should not extend their hands to those who may contest the holy cause or satiate themselves when others are starving. They should take the utmost care not to "belong" to their sovereign's entourage, for this would constitute their moral ruin. The good of Allah should alone be the motivating force, the guiding principle, and the purpose of all their work.

## 2.

## The Islamic Front in Egypt

Islam expects every one of its people, and particularly its preachers, to render his services to God upon this basis and under the guidance of these values. It is disappointing that many Muslims and preachers have not done so. The fourteenth century of the Hegira [i.e., beginning in 1882] has witnessed so much adversity that the true believers' hearts were saddened to despair. Such serious misfortunes have befallen this great religion that we have good reason to be deeply concerned. The caliphate--no more a trust in the hands of true servants of God, but a stolen property in the hands of despots--was dissolved, and the caliph-state declared its enmity to Islam and every other religion. The sad fate that overtook the caliphate was a great calamity to Islam. Then came Western imperialism, a mixture of shameless impiety and vicious crusading, which enveloped the whole Islamic world and tore it to shreds. This political defeat was succeeded by legal, social, and cultural defeats which brought utter ruin to Islam, so that all that remains of its past glory is a few ugly carcasses which await only a town-planning-commissions' decision to be entirely removed from sight.

Is it not the case that the civil institutions of modernity seek to do precisely this thing? Surely, everywhere preparations are at hand for a death-blow to Islam and everything Islamic. What did al-Azhar do to save Islam? What did those institutions do that claim to be in its service?

The answer is that this Islamic front, with its professional, amateur or volunteer soldiers, has not as yet exerted any significant effort in the right direction. A new Jahiliyah has appeared on our horizons and filled the air with its wicked philosophies, yet it meets with no resistance. The story of Sheikh Khālid and his book, "From Here We Start", is only the tragedy of an Azharite 'alim who grew up on Islamic teachings, but went astray by considering empty superstitions and vicious priesthood as typical of Islam--nay, as Islam itself. Had those Islamic teachings on which he grew up been alive in him and in the community and institutions around him, Sheikh Khālid might have been saved

from his aberration. Today, our people are taught ungodliness and doctrines prejudicial to Islam. Our criticism of Sheikh Khālid's writings about religion and priesthood would not be complete unless we disclosed what are, in our opinion, the origins of such misunderstanding. We shall analyze Sheikh Khālid's reasoning and expose the fallacy of his conclusions.

## 3.

## No Need for Western Authorities

Just as our government naively invites foreign specialists to study problems of public relations that are clear in their nature and obvious in their solution, so Sheikh Khālid has resorted to a number of foreign experts in a matter that has been the subject of the most lucid judgment in both the Koran and the Sunnah.

The discussion of "Priesthood and Religion" does not go beyond these limits. Sheikh Khālid launched the most strenuous campaign against those who only pretend to be religious or work in religion's name while they violate every divine rule or counsel religion has established. Such attacks upon irreligious "men of religion" cannot but win the sympathy of everyone, including ourselves. Even if it were ever allowed that the 'ulama of Islam might sit idle and rest for awhile, this is certainly not the time for it. The defeats and tragedies that have befallen Islam in our days make it absolutely imperative for all true believers to be deeply concerned. To remain silent, to acquiesce, or to be totally absorbed in the struggle for existence and comfort would be the depth of ignominy. Sheikh Khālid called "priests" all those who seek self-advancement in their people's defeat and care only to consolidate their power when the people are being devoured by foreigners of all kinds. He quoted from H.G. Wells's "Outlines of World History" as to the characteristics of this class of men, "the priesthood", and their profane methods of deception and robbery. As we have said, there is no need for all these quotations since our Shari'ah and literature are full of statements far more accurate and à propos. The first characteristic of priesthood is, in Khālid's own words, that

they exhort "the people to pious and humble sufficiency, whereas they themselves are its direst enemies and the first to rob, to seek booty, wealth, and vainglory."

The priesthood fills its stomach with the richest delicacies and exhorts the people "to fast and thereby grow healthier". It constructs palatial lodgings, appropriates the largest estates and exhorts the people to "the poverty of the children of God". No doubt, opposition to, and the fight against these men is a duty; but it is one that Islam required of the believers long before the time of Khālid or Wells. The literature of every age is full of the attacks of the conscientious against them. "O preacher," so runs an old verse of poetry, "You accuse people of doing things that you do not accuse yourself of doing. You blame the people who seek the world, and you are more anxious therefor than they."

Yahya bin Ma'ādh al-Rāzi used to say to the 'ulama of his day: "Your houses are Chosroite palaces, your vehicles are like Qārūn's, your urns are Pharaonic, your crimes are Jahiliyah, your doctrines are satanic. Where then is your Muhammadan profession?"

How far in accuracy of intent is the Wells quotation from the following saying of the Prophet: "Towards the end, there will be men who will confound religion and the world; they would wear sheepskins, their tongues would be as sweet as honey, but their hearts would be as black as pitch."? God has said: "Do ye seek to deceive me? Are ye so impudent as to violate my commands? I give ye my word that I shall send ye men who will disperse and ruin you."

However, our concern is not one of scholarly research in textual statements. We wish instead to draw the reader's attention to the fact that in this age Islam needs men to defend it, to safeguard it and to sacrifice for it their lives and property. I do agree with Sheikh Khālid that the men who now lead the defense of Islam are, without exception, bringing shame to themselves and their cause. This is the least that can be said of them. The service of God and Mammon cannot be combined; nor can the duty of jihad be compatible with the pursuit of pleasure and comfort. It requires a really deranged mind to bring these opposites together in any system of human life. Such must be the minds of those Azharites who grow fat while Islam grows thin, and repose

in comfort while the Islamic peoples suffer in anguish.

These deceivers have devised devilish means for escaping the genuine duties of Islam. They are more crafty and sly than those hashish smugglers who escape justice and the police.

On one hand, we have a group of men satisfied merely with the performance of personal worship. When they are asked to take care of the public, or observe the social duties of Islam, they answer despondently, "Politics is not our business." They fail to see that their foolish misunderstanding of Islam is partially responsible for Palestine's falling into Jewish hands. These "pious" and "devout" simpletons saw Palestine fall without unfolding their hands in protest. On another hand, we have a group that fights sectarianism and worship of the dead, yet its members profess to belong to Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahāb.\* They silently worship the living and sheepishly submit to the tyrants and despots of their "Wahabi" [Saudi Arabia] land. Their government fought the Bedouin gangsters who used to raid the caravans of pilgrims in order to monopolize the raids and appropriate the booty for itself alone, in exactly the same way a big corporation would drive out the little businessmen in order to monopolize the market for itself. And how many butcheries and scandals lie on the conscience of these governments, concerning which the Wahabi 'ulama have remained dumb!! Another group devotes itself to the social duties alone and discards the duties of personal worship as insignificant, whereas these duties are the pillars of Islam and the prime object of its teaching and ethics. It would be a long list indeed if we were to mention all such factions, or comment on the methods their leaders use to enrich and glorify themselves at the cost of debasing religion itself. So too, we have seen many leaders of al-Azhar who did not leave their office chairs until their pockets bulged with riches, though they still claimed to be "spiritual continuations" of the legacy of Muhammad 'Abduh and Jamāl al-Dīn!!

How far are such men from Jamāl al-Dīn, who fought the tyrants till his last breath and fell by their sword! Perhaps the closest approximation to Jamāl al-Dīn is the martyr,

\*The only sect tolerated in Saudi Arabia. \_\_\_\_ Tr.

Hassan al-Banna.\* Among the recalcitrants in holy war there is a common solicitude for their own tranquillity and a concern for the security of their persons and possessions, just as among the warriors of Islam and their kin there is a common sufferance of their despots' terror. Before the battle of Karbalā',\*\* the poet said: "The daughters of Yazīd play secure in palaces, and the daughter of the Prophet leads men on the battlefield."

The true reformer is not one who compromises with corrupt sovereigns or people. He has no respect for perverse institutions, even when they are age-old. He will obliterate or establish what his doctrine teaches him to obliterate or to establish. Only this is his duty.

The reformer, furthermore, does not care for wealth, nor does he seek it; he does not allow himself to be tempted by it, however great that wealth may be. He would spend every last penny in the service of his cause. Whoever works for Islam on any other principle must be doomed to fail. It is for this reason that the great Prophet said: "A man's care for both religious honor and wealth at once is as good as that of two starved wolves for a herd of sheep."

For those who seek to save Islam from its present plight, let the lesson be that taught by the Prophet himself through his example. As to priesthood and its characteristics, let it be as far removed from this lesson as Sheikh Khālid himself wishes.

#### 4.

#### 'ULAMAS AND RULERS

When the rule is entirely Islamic and sovereignty is only a means for the establishment of what is right and good, and when the people look upon their leaders as though they were of them and for them--that is to say, when they

\*Leader of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization, assassinated in Cairo on February 12, 1949. \_\_\_\_ Tr.

\*\*The battle of Karbalā' took place on October 10, 680, between 'Ubaydullah, the Umayyad ruler of Iraq, and al-Hussein ibn-Ali. It was the climax of a religio-political dissension that created the Shī'ah sect in Islam. \_\_\_\_ Tr.

trust and honor them-- , and when the leaders actually serve their people and safeguard God's religion, then the relation of ruler and ruled cannot be any other than that of deep devotion on one side and wholehearted support on the other.

Such heights of excellence and felicity in the relations of ruler and ruled are regarded as strange in the Oriental world, where the leaders keep themselves alive by living in fortresses. In England, for example, princes and other members of royalty stand in line waiting for their turn to buy groceries. The love their people have for them is their only strength. This is only a part of the kind of relation between ruler and ruled that Islam demands, and that actually prevailed in the early days of the Orthodox Caliphate. The situation then was such that the sovereign was a father and the citizens were his children.

In confirmation of this the Prophet has said: "To respect an old Muslim, a serious Koran reader, or a just sovereign, is to honor God." "Three men are entitled to utmost respect: an aged Muslim, a man of knowledge, and a just leader. Whoever does not pay them the honor due is perverse." Thus we see that Islam assigns to the just ruler a very high position and makes it a religious duty to respect and honor him. The Prophet even considered the moral support of such a ruler a form of worship on a par with the four other ways of drawing near to God. Ma'ādh bin-Jabal said, "The Prophet once commended to us five ways in which we can secure God's pleasure, namely, to visit a sick man, to walk in a funeral, to conquer for the sake of God, to visit a ruler with the purpose of supporting or honoring him, and to stay at home and thereby save oneself and others from one's own mischief."

So much for the history and ethics of government in Islam. Let us now consider, as we must, how Islam judges the unjust rule of prejudiced and covetous despots.

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The 'ulama, rather than the public, must be the first to raise their voices in opposition and warning. They must be the first to criticize, to uncover the crime. Where the sovereign has committed an injustice or robbed his people of any right, it is their duty to expose him and destroy his

prestige among the people. If they fail in doing this, they fail in their Islam.

Sa'īd bin-al-Musīb said, "Beware of the 'alim who seeks to protect the men in power; he must be a robber." Abu-Hamīd al-Ghazzālī, in guiding Muslim 'ulama to take the right attitude towards a tyrant, stated: "The Muslim 'alim must avoid the tyrant rulers as much as he possibly can and should by no means visit them in their quarters. If they come to him, he should treat them politely but not in a friendly way. The best course, however, is for him to avoid them, since it is practically impossible to frequent them without sometimes having to agree to their injustice. Every religiously inclined man should do likewise and, together with his brethren, should vilify their acts and make life for them intolerable."

Thus, Islam commands that we have nothing to do with the unjust. To enter into relations with them would be the beginning of a long chain of evil. Makḥūl al-Dimashqī has said: "Whoever has learned theology and the Koran and has then befriended the sovereign in pursuit of the latter's pleasure and riches, will suffer the doom of hell-fire."

Sa'ad bin abi-Waqqāṣ lived long enough to see the rule of Mu'āwīyah. He was once approached by his sons and told: "The kings receive people who are inferior to you in prestige and Islamic piety. Why do you refrain from visiting them?" He answered, "O my sons, how can I visit a dead animal? Though it may be visited by the whole world, I would still refrain." To this, his sons retorted, "Father, would you then see us perish in weakness and starvation?" And he answered, "To die a weak, starved and thin but true believer is far better than to die a fat imposter."

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The foregoing words express the true judgment of Islam regarding wicked rulers. They provide the final answer to those who sell their souls to the devil and pretend to observe Islam. Compared with them, the observations of H.G. Wells are pointless. On other subjects, this English man-of-letters may have great vision and penetrating insight. But respecting the Islamic problems here in question, his ideas are, in comparison with al-Ghazzālī's, very common-

place. We shall cite a few of Khālid's quotations from Wells.

"The priesthood," writes Wells as quoted by Khālid, "teaches the people that the land they cultivate and plant is not theirs, but the property of the gods of the temple, who may grant it to the rulers who, in turn, may grant it to whom-ever they please of their servants and employees."

"In Egypt," he goes on, "it was the temples, Pharaoh the god, or the nobility that received the proceeds of the land. The ordinary citizen fell thereby into a chronic state of submission and dependence. The conquerors of those days realized they had to seek the cooperation of the priesthood of the vanquished people if they wanted to guarantee their dominion. The whole point is that the majority of the people should enjoy neither authority nor any of the comforts and joys of life."

After quoting these (historic!!) texts, Sheikh Khālid goes on to describe the present state of affairs in Islamic lands and seeks to apply the Anglo-Saxon medicine. He spares no effort to expose the tyranny of the unjust Muslim rulers and their silent backing by the responsible "men of religion". He writes: "This is the teaching of priesthood, old and new. It has not changed for thousand of years. The ardent, hard-working fellah is still the victim of those priests who exhort him to silent acceptance and resignation. His acceptance of this teaching and his belief therein varies with the degree of his general consciousness. In Yemen, for example, the priesthood is an exact copy of that spoken of by Wells. A newspaperman who visited that country during its recent disturbances reported that what most astonished him was the attribution of everything to the king of Yemen, the Imam. The man in the street would point to his camel and say, 'This is the camel of the Imam.' He would point to his donkey and say, 'That is the Imam's donkey.' Thus they speak of 'the Imam's well', 'the Imam's land', 'the Imam's sheep and goat', and so on. In short, the priesthood seeks to dissolve the personality of the whole nation and keep it in a wretched state of servility and submissiveness in order to facilitate dominion and exploitation of the people. The people would then follow any sovereign and acclaim him, saying with the poet: 'O Peter or Paul, thou art our leader, chief, and pillar! Thou art the true descendant of our ancestors!'

"This has been the essence of priesthood for over five thousand years. It is an essence from which it can never separate itself, today or any day. Without being instructed by Wells, contemporary priests possess exactly the same pernicious instincts, which draw them towards their crimes as their predecessors were drawn thousands of years ago."

We are fully aware that there are in the Islamic East many vile and tyrannous governments. And we know, with no less certainty, that there is a large number of 'ulama who have exchanged their religion and the life to come for some vainglory below. The 'ulama give the tyrants moral support and acclaim every unjust act and crime they inflict upon the people. However, the opinion of Wells does not find here perfect application. The Islamic texts that condemn these criminals are readily available to every scholar; and no history, philosophy, or other system of law should have taken precedence in Khālid's mind over the first principles of Islam, which alone provide sufficiently and clearly the necessary condemnation.

In Yemen, which Khālid chose to take as an instance of his thesis, a great revolt against the "priesthood" occurred, and the Imam paid with his own life. The purpose of the revolution was the termination of injustice and despotism, and the establishment of the people's right to live freely under God's protection and justice. This took place despite the fact that neither the rebels nor their leaders had ever heard of H.G. Wells. They derived their inspiration wholly from their religion, from Islam and the Islamic texts. Had their revolution proved successful like that of the French in 1789, Sheikh Khālid would have had another story to tell. But as the poet says, "The people are full of compliments for him who succeeds; but he who makes a mistake, they all call stupid."

##### 5.

##### Priesthood and Islam

If Sheikh Khālid wishes to include under the term "priesthood" those 'ulama who betray their religion and violate God's commandments, he may certainly do so. For "So shall be called," says an Arabic verse, "whosoever gives reason to be called evil."

It is a great error, however, so to enlarge the definition of Priesthood as to include Islam as well as Christianity, the Mosque as well as the Church. Sheikh Khālid persisted in this error throughout his book. He confounded the histories of the two religions, and hence was induced to propose means of reform entirely at variance with the true nature of the Muslim. For the Muslim knows the advantages of his own religion and is aware of its inherent adaptability and its capacity for perpetual growth as an organic system. Sheikh Khālid, however, wandered about in a labyrinth of his own devising, and emerged with a reform program designed for the Mosque as well as the Church--a spiritual aberration we shall discuss later. At present, we must draw attention to the fact that priesthood is a true characteristic of other religions, such as Buddhism, Brahmanism, and Christianity--where the priests have provided to this very day the link between people and temple. In these religions priests are indispensable and are required to officiate at every occasion of joy or sorrow, whether private or public.

Islam, however, is absolutely free from any such implication. It recognizes no need for priests. We may, of course, call certain Muslims "priests" by analogy, if their personal conduct warrants such appellation. But Islam itself cannot be called priesthood, nor can there be any such thing as "Islamic priesthood".

It may possibly be argued in defense of Khālid that the ascription of priesthood to Islam was meant solely by way of exaggerated vituperation, but the fact remains that he considered this to be true and anxiously sought to confirm it with scholarly and textual proofs. It is no wonder that his work was in vain.

Another surprising and offensive error of Sheikh Khālid is his claim that there is an Islamic priesthood which declared a war to the knife against the human mind, against scientific progress and against every attempt by man to civilize and advance himself. Sheikh Khālid asserted that the so-called Islamic priesthood lost this war as its Western brother had previously done. Intoxicated by its preliminary victories, the Western Christian priesthood thought it could abuse the lives of geniuses without account. But soon, this priesthood had to pay the price, and then

only its life and being was a sufficient atonement. As it fell, the procession of mind and reason resumed its course; and it will continue thereon to its preordained destiny.

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O Misery! Where is the Oriental Islamic priesthood that is so terribly hostile to science and genius? Is there an Islamic priesthood akin to Christian priesthood? No doubt, the expression "Islamic priesthood" must be the title of a fictitious story that is neither entertaining nor amusing. The tremendous impetus Islam has given to world civilization and the great contributions of Islam's scientists to the progress of mankind are not doubted by anyone--Muslim or infidel. To claim that an "Islamic priesthood" has combatted the human mind for a single hour or, as Sheikh Khālid would have it, for a whole age, is utterly false and is a shameless delusion. Sheikh Khālid may have heard one of his students report that a certain preacher had once told his congregation: "You may have read in the ungodly newspapers that the scientists claim to communicate with the moon and that Jupiter is an inhabited planet. All this is devil's artifice, and is untrue. The moon is only a light; so is the sun, and the Earth does not revolve...and so forth." But such stupid nonsense can never justify Sheikh Khālid's conclusions. By no means does it enable him to write: "The priesthood uses the mosque and the pulpit to sap the strength of society..." and "The priesthood fights the mind because the latter uncovers its weaknesses and deficiencies, exposes its crimes and seriously tries to bring it to its end...and so forth."

I myself have been a preacher and a mosque inspector for about ten years, and Sheikh Khālid too has been a preacher at al-Jam'iyah al-Shar'iyah for a number of years. Neither of us has ever felt that an "Oriental Islamic priesthood" is controlling us through a paralyzing policy of its own. Rather, we have found that there is hardly a position in the whole state where we could carry out our mission with such freedom as in that of a mosque preacher. And the preachers do differ in their natural endowment, in their degree of knowledge, of enthusiasm, and sincerity.

Let us even suppose, for argument's sake, that there are



many preachers like the one mentioned above. Let us suppose that all Egyptian preachers are more ignorant than those of Nejd or Yemen. Further, let us suppose that al-Jam'iyah al-Shar'iyah, where Sheikh Khālīd is a member, has secretly hanged one of Egypt's atomic scientists. Supposing this were true, would it enable us to say that there is an Islamic priesthood which is brother to that Christian priesthood which for centuries inspired terror and killed genius in every intellectual field, which buried its teeth in the flesh of scientists and discoverers, which legislated against the human mind and reason on every possible occasion and built courthouses in which to judge them? Never!

## 6.

## The Grave Aberration

We should be quite pleased if someone who has read "From Here We Start" would come forth with the apology that Sheikh Khālīd meant simply to expose those who pretend to be Muslim and that his discussion of "Islam and Priesthood" is intended only as a criticism of ignorant, deceptive, and exploiting Muslim preachers. Then, it would accord well with the spirit, though not with the letter of Islam.

We too denounce pretentious religiosity and fight against those "priests" who rob and kill in Islam's name. But we judge every single thing in the world by means of the Book and the Sunnah. We accept whatever accords therewith and reject whatever contradicts them.

Sheikh Khālīd fought the "priesthood" he presumed to exist in contemporary Islam with another priesthood he created out of pure fancy. In truth, his fanatic nationalism has caused him to regard Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as being alike, and consequently he prescribed for Islam what has been prescribed for the other two religions.

The nationalism of modern times insists upon relegating religion--in monotheistic as well as polytheistic countries--to a position of little consequence. Thus, we heard the leader of an Egyptian party proclaim to his followers: "Go to the mosque on Friday if you are a Muslim, to the church on Sunday if you are a Christian, or to the synagogue on Saturday if you are a Jew."

What is here intended is the orientation of all religions to the welfare and service of the country. Thus it is considered to be all one whether religion is used for spiritual communion with God or the furtherance of public security. Religion becomes only another means, and should be subservient to the state.

But to consider Islam as a religion endowed with a general message that encompasses and transcends both country and race, is, therefore, high treason and deserves capital punishment. Sheikh Khālīd's view is fundamentally this. His nationalism is fanatical and absolute, and it draws no distinction between different religions.

Had he combated priesthood with the purpose of strengthening Islam and God's cause, his long-winded discussions, diverse interpretations, and exaggerations might have been acceptable. But he disappoints his reader, as, for instance, in this passage: "Have I omitted the Church? No.... For every one of my suggestions for the reform of the Mosque is applicable to the Church. Thus, a council composed of the wise men of the Church (!!!) should be formed for the purpose of orienting it to the creation and service of a healthy community. In order that this scheme may prove successful, an extensive campaign should be organized through broadcasting, the theater, and contests for the re-writing of religious doctrine, in such way as to glorify both religion and life..."

What religion is this that Sheikh Khālīd wants to exhort the citizens to honor? Obviously, it is not the one intended in God's words: "Verily the true religion in the sight of God is Islam." "Do they therefore seek any other religion but God's? Since to him is resigned whosoever is in heaven or on earth, voluntarily, or by force, and to Him shall they return." "Whosoever followeth any other religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him."

Evidently, it is a religion of much wider scope; it is not simply what we usually understand "religion" to mean. Hence, the program Sheikh Khālīd drew up was meant to reform both Mosque and Church.

What has Sheikh Khālīd to do with the Church? If he really wishes to reform the Church, would he bring a muezzin to climb its tower and call, "There is no God but God"? Or, if he wishes for a personal reconciliation with

the Church, why does he draw up plans for the whole people? If it were the case that Sheikh Khālid meant to reconstruct the Islamic community, would he draw his inspiration from any other source than divine revelation, the Holy Koran, and the Sunnah? Would he refrain from waging a war to the knife against the imposters and falsifiers who have missed the true path and gone astray?

To hope for the reconstruction of the Islamic East under this modern Jahiliyah which now takes the form of nationalism, is idle. Nationalism is only a ruse of war and strategy espoused and encouraged by heathenism for the purposes of overwhelming, and then obliterating, Islam.

## 7.

## A Frank Word

We love our fatherland, but we do not take pride in this fact alone, for love of one's home is more than a duty--it is an instinct with which even animals have been endowed. Yet we will not sell our religion for the whole Orient and Occident. This religion of ours, for which we are prepared to sacrifice everything we love, has a theology, an economic doctrine and a world policy, all its own. It is a sinister thing to exhort us to discard all of these for nationalism, communism, democracy, or any other "ism"; for it is nothing less than asking us to become heathen.

The "Islamism" in which we believe and for which we work will automatically take care of our homeland and enable every citizen to live a righteous, abundant, egalitarian, and just life, no matter what his denomination or sect may be.

After the successive tragedies that have befallen us and our country in every field, it has become especially imperative that our reconstruction be carried out on a genuinely Islamic basis.

Insofar as Islam gives the adherents of another faith the same rights and imposes upon them the same duties as its own followers, and as long as it does not oppose the tenets of other religions, the so-called "problem of minorities" is really a manifestation of pure imperialism, intended solely as a means of tarnishing the Muslim's reputation in the world,

and as a rationalization of the invasion of Muslim lands by the Western powers. This should incite us only to double our efforts until Islam is victorious again.

Since its rise in Europe and its service as a basis for international organization, nationalism has regarded religion as being something inevitable with which it is well to be on good terms. When nationalism journeyed to the East, it adopted many profane traits and suffered from the dangers to which any blind imitation is exposed. The Muslims were so decrepit that their resistance to it was largely ineffective. The non-Muslims, of course, have welcomed nationalism enthusiastically for the obvious advantage it has of lending itself readily to the destruction of Islam. And this is precisely what has happened.

Islam, as a common nationality among its adherents everywhere, has weakened in proportion to the growth of local nationalisms.

Islam has also become weaker as an ethical power protecting against immorality and vice. And when we recognize that nothing can take the place of Islam in elevating moral and spiritual standards, we can better appreciate the gravity of our present situation.

Furthermore, Western imperialism took great care to destroy Islam's militancy which bound Muslims together against any foreign aggression. At the same time, the Western powers instigated the minorities to demand a full share in the affairs of their countries--as though they constituted a good half, and not a scant twentieth, of the people. This the minorities will always gladly and shamelessly claim when encouraged by a strong foreign power. Everybody knows that the writings of Salāmah Mūsa, published in his well-known sectarian newspaper, have actually served--the British!

It is surprising that these bitter facts have all escaped Sheikh Khālid; it must be regretted that he cooperated with a movement which has been trying to kill Islam for the last one hundred years.

## 8.

## Al-Azhar's Attitude towards Nationalism

To our great sorrow, al-Azhar did not begin a campaign against nationalism and its evils until very recently. It is even possible that the 'ulamas of al-Azhar have realized only too late the grave dangers which threaten Islam. They have already allowed the devil to plant his crop and watch over its growth, and not until after the harvest appeared was a voice raised in protest. Here is part of an appeal the 'ulama made to the head of government:

Anyone who looks at our people and observes the depths to which religion and morals have sunk should be alarmed and feel obliged to rescue our nation from the unhappy future awaiting it. The people have become too lax to observe the religious commandments. They have forgotten the Islamic traditions. Licence and decadence have spread among the multitudes, who pursue this false modernity and are deceived by its glossy exterior. Corruption has become too common, and now even the youth, upon whom the future depends, are falling easy prey to the affliction. In their parties and social gatherings, our men and women meet under conditions that shame every Islamic standard of decency; they drink alcohol, gamble with their fortunes, and bring ruin to their families and themselves. Similarly, at the races, all forms of dissoluteness prey upon the people while they are also being robbed of their money. Shameless beauty contests are held which only increase evil and provide further temptations. Our shores are strewn with nude bodies, and all these sinister activities are reported and photographed in the papers and magazines to bring the evil into the homes of the innocent.

This is taking place in our country and is being allowed to degrade our morals and uproot our traditions. Truly, the situation calls for immediate action.

The European "civilization", with all its evil and degradation, has developed in us a morbid mentality, a morbid taste, and has made of us a morbid community that looks upon its own morbidity and decay as a thing

of virtue and a sign of progress. Our decadent government protected the imported germ-breeding institutions, organized them and even collected taxes and fees from them as if they were lawful and proper means of state income.

Once corrupt, the greatest corruption is to regard one's corruption as good and desirable. When this stage is reached, the transformation of our once noble ethos is complete.

The "civilized" nations of today provide a perfect example of the fate we ourselves may expect. We have witnessed the fall of these corrupt and decadent nations in the face of their strong and morally healthy enemies, and we have heard their leaders proclaim the causes of defeat when it was too late.

What has happened as a result of this petition? Nothing! And nothing will ever happen! Those who carried the petition to the head of the government were given a dignified reception; but as soon as they left, their document found its place among other forgotten papers on some forlorn shelf. Nor could we expect any other fate to befall a petition of this kind. How can the idols be broken by their own worshippers? Everything the petition asked to be abolished is still present, and is even on the increase.

## 9.

## Freedom from Fear and Ambition; the Service of the People

The ideal way to accomplish reform is neither by written nor by verbal preaching. The Prophet preached only in the measure in which preaching was complementary to his first task, namely, the education and development of men through righteous acts, impeccable character and shining virtue. Ibn 'Abbās once commented to 'Akramah: "Preach to the people once a week; or if you would, twice. But to preach to them three times is too much. The people should not be surfeited with the Koran. You should not interrupt anybody in order to tell a religious story. Preach only when you are requested to do so; then, your preaching will be better appreciated."

From this we learn that the attempt by the 'ulama to further the cause of religion through excessive preaching does more harm than good. Rather, they should concentrate on creating popular organizations that will do what religion commands, on cooperating among themselves, and on preparing themselves for Holy War.

For such conduct to succeed, the 'ulama should define their attitude towards the government and should not refrain from attacking it in case it runs counter to religious principles. They should also, of course, keep the people informed of the government's violation of any religious commandment.

Government corruption in the Orient is an old affliction. To fight it is a very difficult task. The 'ulama, therefore, should not be satisfied with silent condemnation; and if they do satisfy themselves with so little, they either are guilty of treason or are on a par with the ignorant man of the street. The famous Hadith is no doubt true: "Two orders of people are so important that, if they are righteous, the whole of society must be righteous, and if they are corrupt, the whole of society must be corrupt. These are the princes and the 'ulama.

Those 'ulama who befriend the tyrants in order to attain office, power or wealth should not be called by their titles. They are the most evil and God-accursed people. The Prophet said of them that "the greatest punishment awaits those 'ulama whose knowledge has not availed them"; that "in the end of time the people will be ignorant and the 'ulama corrupt"; that "whoever seeks Mammon by means of God shall be condemned to eternal fire".

Islam today has been afflicted with a large number of such false 'ulama. It is a calamity of which the effects are hard to assess.

The example of those who seek to serve Islam by first seeking to please the sovereign is identical with that of a prophet who, in seeking to bring the people back to the one true God, should decide first to worship the idols and beg their permission and blessing for what he is about to do.

If only we could free ourselves from ambition, office-craving and the fear of sovereigns! Unless we do so liberate ourselves, at whatever cost, we shall never be able to work for God.

## Chapter IV

### BETWEEN CRESCENT AND CROSS

Ye will conquer Egypt. . . . Be good unto its people for they are honest and kind.

A Hadith

In reading the Holy Koran one cannot fail to reach the conclusion that the fundamental teachings of all religions are one and the same. The name Islam may not have had its present connotation in the years preceding the time of the Prophet, but the Koran has confirmed the fact that Islam is a concept as old as prophethood, and that the ancient prophets have all preached the same religion as Muhammad and have done so under the identical name of Islam.

The petty differences that may exist between the subsidiary commandments of the various religions do not affect their uniform central core. The same truths may be taught to variously endowed students, and these may express them in more or less clear, perfect, and beautiful form. It is for this reason that the prophets do not all belong to the same order of rank, although the substance of their prophecy is one and the same. "These are the Apostles," says the Holy Koran. "We have preferred some of them before others: Some of them hath God spoken unto, and hath exalted the degree of others of them. And ~~we~~ gave unto Jesus, the son of Mary, manifest signs, and strengthened him with the holy spirit."

The secret of Muhammad's greatness and distinction over that of the other prophets is, perhaps, his superior righteousness and his great zeal. No other prophet could attract and bind the people to what is good and true as he could. In addition to this, his method knew neither dogmatism nor coercion of any kind, for his whole religion is built on the free exercise of reason. It is easy to perceive in him a great hero who succeeded in "transvaluating" the

values of Jahiliyah in the consciousness of his people and elevating their ethos towards a new, higher kind of humanity and civilization. But this end is precisely the same as that for which every other prophet had striven. Muhammad is responsible only for man's drawing closer to the Supreme Being than any of the others.

To prove this, we shall not go into any detail of the Prophet's biography, but shall quote from the Koran a few passages that will show the common purpose of all prophets.

Noah said to his people: "If my standing forth among you, and my warning you of the signs of God, be grievous unto you; in God do I put my trust. Therefore lay your design against me, and assemble your false gods; but let not your design be carried on by you in the dark... And I am commanded to be one of those who resigned unto him." Abraham is also reported to have said: "Who will be averse to the religion of Abraham, but he whose mind is infatuated? Surely We have chosen him in this world, and in that which is to come he shall be one of the righteous. When his Lord said unto him, Resign thyself unto me; he answered, I have resigned myself unto the Lord of all creatures."

In the surah of Ya'qub, the so-called "Israel" to whom modern Zionists claim affiliation, God says: "Were ye present when Jacob was at the point of death? When he said to his sons, Whom will ye worship after me? they answered, We will worship thy God, and the God of thy fathers Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, one God, and to Him will we be resigned."

Teaching the people to be patient and to resist injustice, the Koran reports Mūsa as saying: "And Moses said, O my people, If ye believe in God, put your trust in Him, if ye be resigned to His will." Of Sulaymān, when he called the Queen of Sheba to give up star-worship and to worship the true God, the Koran records: "She said, O nobles, verily an honorable letter hath been delivered unto me; it is from Solomon, and this is the tenor thereof: In the name of the most merciful God, Rise not up against me; but come, and surrender yourselves unto me." And later, in another passage, the Queen of Sheba says, "O Lord, verily I have dealt unjustly with my own soul; and I resign myself together with Solomon, unto God, the Lord of all creatures."

Yūsuf [Joseph] whom God allowed to be a prophet and to

whom He gave power and glory in this world and the next, said: "O Lord, thou hast given me a part of the kingdom, and hast taught me the interpretation of dark sayings. The creator of heaven and earth! Thou art my protector in this world, and in that which is to come. Make me to die a Muslim, and join me with the righteous."

The prophet 'Isa [Jesus] worshipped God most devotedly and exerted all his effort to bring the people back to Him. He also tried to purify his fellowmen of their base cravings and idolatry, but was opposed by the evil people, who even tried to end his life. "But when Jesus perceived their unbelief, he said, Who will be my helpers towards God? The Apostles answered, We will be the helpers of God; we believe in God, and do thou bear witness that we are true believers."

The Koranic verses showing that all religions have one nature and one message are therefore many. "No other is said unto thee than what hath been formerly said unto the apostles before thee."

It was by reason of these statements that the Muslims addressed Jews and Christians as though they were their brethren. The tie of brotherhood has been clearly recognized and genuinely felt by the Muslims. This is evident in two anecdotes, which follow:

When the position of the early Muslims in Mecca became critical, the Prophet advised his companions to take refuge in Ethiopia where, he thought, the Christian king would provide protection and safety. Quraysh, the powerful tribe of Mecca, tried to incite the Christian Ethiopians against the fleeing Muslims, explaining that the latter did not recognize, as the Christians did, the divinity of Jesus. The Negus, however, called on the Muslims to present their creed; and when he heard what the Koran said concerning Mary, Jesus, and the story of Jesus' birth, he was well pleased with the glorification that Islam accorded the story of the Nativity, and offered the Muslims his protection.

Similarly, at the time when the heathen were praying for a Persian victory over the Christian Byzantines, the Muslims prayed for the victory of the latter. With the Persian victory, the Muslims' sorrow was so evident that the pagan Arabs felt as though the Christian defeat had been a Muslim defeat as well. The Prophet had then to lift up his men's

morale by reassuring them that Persian heathenism would be defeated and Christianity would once again triumph. "The Greeks have been overcome by the Persians, in the nearest part of the land; but after their defeat, they shall overcome the others in their turn, within a few years. Unto God belongeth the disposal of this matter, both for what is past and for what is to come, and on that day shall the believers rejoice in the success granted by God."

As they expected to find friendship and goodwill among the Christians, the early Muslims expected not less from the Jews. As soon as they arrived at Medina, they sought to unite themselves with the Jews in an alliance based upon the protection of rights and defense against aggression. Indeed, the goodhearted and candid Muslims expected the Jews to sponsor the new monotheism, or at least, to remain neutral in the Muslim-pagan fight. They did not expect them to intervene in favor of idolaters but thought that, in accordance with their Torah, they would pronounce a just and righteous judgment in the case of a people to whom stone idols were the only authority for justice and righteousness. "The unbelievers will say, Thou art not sent of God. Answer, God is a sufficient witness between me and you, and he who understandeth the scriptures."

However, the Jews, People of the Book who supposedly knew the wisdom of the Book, testified that paganism was better than the religion of Muhammad!!!

Like men of principle in all ages, the Muslims were over-anxious to think well of everyone and of all. They sought peace and believed that everyone else did likewise. But they soon found out the bitter truth and realized they were hated despite their most generous and loving disposition. Thus, God said: "Behold, ye love them, and they do not love you: ye believe in all the scriptures, and when they meet you, they say, We believe; but when they assemble privately together, they bite their fingers' ends out of wrath against you."

In spite of what has happened, we have always liked to lend a helping hand and open our hearts to every movement of reconciliation between the various religions. We shall welcome and sponsor every union of religious men whose purpose is to construct instead of destroy, to remind man of his divine origin, to muster his energies for the fight

against disbelief and sin, and to work for his return to the sphere of revelation and faith.

Such a hoped-for-union of religions is not like a chemical compound wherein the constituent elements suffer transformation and lose their original characteristics. If it were, the union would not only be impossible, but also unacceptable. The desired union is one in which all religions remain as they are, yet with many advantages accruing to each. It should be based upon the following principles:

The beliefs of a certain religion shall not be forced upon the adherents of another one. The Jews, for instance, would not have to believe in Jesus, nor would the Christians have to believe in Muhammad. However strongly a people may believe that their own religion is true and the others' false, they shall not seek to enforce their religion in the domain of public life or use it as a means for spreading dissension or persecuting other people.

In their essence, all religions concur in these principles. It is only just that no people should be required to give up a certain tenet of faith in order to prove their goodwill towards another people. Otherwise, the proposed union would be, not a union in friendship, but a dominion of one religion by another, a victory of one nation over the other. The union we seek is one based upon mutual respect, not on absorption and injustice.

Where several religions meet in the same country, the coordination of their diverse interests is not an easy matter. However, the fact that the followers of each religion have lawful interests does not annul the right of the majority to power, sovereignty and the execution of its program.

Modern democracy is based upon the same principle. In England, for example, the Labour Party has only five seats more than the Conservative Party; and yet, it has assumed power and imposed its socialist program on the whole people. Since the Muslims constitute over ninety per cent of the population of Egypt, they must likewise have the right to make the Egyptian state Islamic *en chair et en os*. The fact that Islam regards itself as the continuation of the teachings of Moses and Jesus should further contribute to making this possible.

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We have proposed the foregoing principles as a basis for cooperation among the divine religions. There are of course other principles under which the followers of diverse religions are united, and these have actually been implemented in most countries of the world. According to these principles, Jews, Christians and Muslims are regarded as equal, but only after they have all been separated from their own religions and denied their own faiths. Such union is obviously ungodly and wicked.

There are, of course, Jews who recognize neither Moses nor the Torah. Only recently, the newspapers reported Einstein's address to a convention of perhaps the greatest scientists in the world. He exhorted his colleagues to fight the superstition of the "Idea of God" and banish it from the minds of men once and for all. He told them that to succeed in this fight is the greatest victory mankind can achieve.

Is such a person a Jew? Can his like be given a voice in the matter of cooperation among the men of religion? Obviously not. In contrast to Einstein, whose eminence in the world of science is not to be disputed, there stand at the bottom of the pyramid of intellectuals Muhammad al-Tābi'i, a so-called Muslim, and Salāmah Mūsa, a so-called Christian, who have vehemently defended adultery and corruption. These two persons may claim to have an opinion in the press or in political affairs. But in respect to religion, their opinion is one with the devil's.

However, Salāmah Mūsa's impertinence knows no bounds. With a group of small, though clever, people, he began to draw up a comprehensive program of cooperation between the Muslims and the Copts in Egypt.

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We should be the first to acclaim a union of Crescent and Cross; but it must be a union of those who believe in Jesus and in Muhammad, not of those who believe in neither.

The ones who claim to have studied "the two races of Egypt", as they call them, are the least trustworthy.

In fact, Salāmah Mūsa's pernicious faction has been trying to trouble the waters in order to fish in them. It has

actually sought to incite Muslims and Copts against one another. The purpose of this is twofold:

- a. The destruction of Islam, by fighting an incessant war against its doctrine and system and thus forcing the Muslims eventually to abandon it.
- b. The destruction of the adherents of Islam, by first enabling the Coptic minority to achieve power and then by obtaining the greatest and the highest number of posts in the government and public services.

We shall observe in the sequel the facts attesting to these vicious ulterior motives that lurk behind the apparently innocent words of Salāmah Mūsa and his followers.

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It is a plot directed against all religions though it may seem, at first sight, a plot against Islam alone.

In their campaign against God's religion, Salāmah's group follows the well-known slogan: "Lie, lie, and lie again! Something will, in the end, cling to the people's minds as true."

Salāmah's false propaganda revolves around the theme that the Muslims are the enemies of the minorities living in their lands (!!), that the Muslim majority in Egypt lies in wait for the Christian and Jewish minorities (!!), and so forth.

The testimony of Islam's rule in Egypt during the last fourteen centuries is sufficient to choke these imposters with their own lies.

Religious minorities have suffered persecution only at the hands of savage and barbarous Europe.

The Jews have lived among us many long centuries without the least injustice befalling them as a community. During the same time in Europe, Jews were being slaughtered and burned at the stake. From Russia to Spain, the fields were covered with gallows and stakes on which the Jewish minorities perished by the thousands. Hitler's attempt to exterminate them is a crime for which the whole of Europe really is responsible.

Only in the countries of Islam have the Jews been spared.

In Europe, the Christians have divided themselves into various parties according to the divergence of their views as to how religious minorities ought to be persecuted and

liquidated. The sinister butcheries staining the political history of Europe can never be denied. Nor can the afflictions imposed upon Catholics by Protestants, or vice versa, ever be erased from the pages of history.

On the other hand, there has never been a happier Christian minority than that living among the Muslims.

Even today, we Muslims may feel rightfully proud that our tolerance and nobility are beyond question, however much Salāmah's impostors may accuse us to the contrary. We shall not lose an iota of our original virtues, however they may be denied or depreciated.

Yes, the ingratitude of these men will not alter our noble disposition towards them. We have been kind to thousands of Jews who committed deliberate treason against us and forgot that we welcomed them at a time when the whole world regarded killing Jews as a means of self-reconciliation with God. The Jews have now forsaken us and allied themselves with Western imperialism against us.

This pernicious band of unbelievers and impostors now seeks to propagate a sinister lie, hitherto unknown. Nor will this lie ever be true of our future history either, not because we fear anybody, but because we are Muslims, and Islam teaches that we should do justice to everyone even though the result might be unfavorable to ourselves.

The purpose behind their lie against us is the establishment of non-religious rule among the twenty million Muslims of Egypt.

Whenever a group of Muslims seeks to reinstitute the divine laws, this faction cries for help, claiming that the religious minority is in danger and that nature's laws have been violated.

In a book published by these malefactors we read the following irreligious words of Ismā'īl Sidqi Pasha: "We must differentiate between our policy and that of the religious factions, for it appears that our own policy has been tainted with a religious dye--a tendency we must suppress at all costs. Neither an Arab nor an Islamic policy is compatible with modern times. In the past, our policy was founded on a different basis. The great and brilliant Muhammad Ali al-Kabīr, for instance, looked to the West, and all the improvements he brought about were Western. Ismā'īl and King Fu'ād did likewise after him. Even Sa'd

Zaghlūl, the al-Azhar graduate, stood for a purely Egyptian, non-Arab, non-Islamic policy. He always looked towards Europe. Why should we now forsake this tradition and follow an Islamic policy? Of what good can such a change be?"

After quoting these words Dr. Zaghlūl, a member of Salāmah Mūsā's group, writes: "Can anything be more clear or frank than these words of this highly endowed, unique and wise statesman?"

Such is the essence of Salāmah Mūsā's movement. Everything that contributes to the sapping of Islam is, in his view, full of wisdom and progress. Whenever somebody says, "God has revealed to us His wisdom which we should observe"; Salāmah immediately raises his voice to Europe and America and pleads, "The minority is in danger!!!"

Salāmah's view of the Coptic minority is really a deception which constitutes a threat to the Torah, the Bible, and the Koran all at once.

In another of the group's publications the following statement occurred; "We have suffered and are still suffering from the tragedy of Palestine because of our obsession with racial and religious sectarianism. It is useless to hide this fact from ourselves and the outside world."

The implication of this is that Palestine should have been given to the Jews, that the religious enthusiasm with which the Muslims rose to rescue their brethren is hateful "religious sectarianism". Our duty, these people might advise, should have been the silencing of our feelings of fidelity and honor, and the denial of rescue to the oppressed and the weak.

That is the purpose for which the "gangsters" work in our country. Opposition to it is regarded by them as fanaticism. They invite the intervention of Europe and America in our affairs and provide them with the excuse of "protecting the minorities". Their hatred of the awakened Islamic spirit in those who volunteered to fight the Jews in Palestine is still more conspicuous in the following statement: "We have seen the black day of Zionism. Palestine is gone (so he says!); we have entered a war pretending that we shall prevent the establishment of the Jewish state, but we have succeeded only in preventing the establishment of the Arab state." He then addresses the members of the Muslim Brotherhood, "Do you wish for another day on which



you will fight Christianity?" And he himself answers, "Yes, we do wish for such a day."

What kind of nonsense is this?

Both Christians and Muslims have risen to fight the Jewish aggressors. If religion provides no sufficient reason for combating them, then the purely worldly interests of Palestine's neighbors amply does so. What is, then, the purpose of their propaganda?

The purpose, we repeat, is obviously to instigate the Copts against the Muslims and to use this hostility as a weapon in the general battle against Islam. This propaganda is meant to make the Copts believe that every Islamic awakening will necessarily result in an attack upon them. No doubt, the majority of Copts know that this is not true and that this false alarm has no grounds whatsoever. The average Copt stands in no need of being informed afresh that, throughout the first centuries of the Hegira, Islamic rule was far cleaner, more benevolent and more tolerant than any European rule of the Middle Ages. Moreover, the ungodly rule that Salāmah Mūsa's party advocates is unacceptable to the pious and religious men of either religion.

The members of this party propagandize for an irreligious rule in Egypt; and in this course, they demand of the Muslims that they discard their religious teachings and give us the rights to which their superior numbers entitle them. "I believe," says Salāmah Mūsa, "that state and religion ought to be separated and that government schools have no right to teach any particular religion to their students. The schools exist for the purpose of giving knowledge, and religion is not knowledge. Religion is only a development of the emotions; hence, it should be a matter for the parents alone to handle."

It becomes clear that Salāmah Mūsa's movement also aims at the severance of all ties between the Muslims of Egypt and those of other countries. It teaches us to forget everything and remember but one thing--that we are Egyptians only. One of the leaders of this movement once wrote commenting on the foundation of the old Nationalist Party: "It is the first movement that defined Egyptian nationalism in clear terms. Thanks to it, Egyptian nationalism has been firmly founded and purified of the evils of the sultanate. Furthermore, the nationalist movement has saved Egypt

from being involved with the Islamic bloc. It has been the first non-religious revolution in the Orient... We mention with pride the fourth section of the Nationalist Party program, 'The Nationalist Party is a political, not a religious party; and it is constituted of men of diverse religious denominations...'

That we are Egyptian, no one denies. Nor is there any doubt as to our duties towards the fatherland. But that our Egyptianism cannot be genuine unless we give up Islam and deny its teachings and duties is far from being true; rather, it is a fantastic claim.

Why should not the Muslims of Egypt be true to their religion? Why should not the Copts of Egypt, likewise, remain true to their Bible and church? Have they not all been true, each to his own religion, for many long centuries?

Is unbelief a requirement for nationalism? And ungodliness a proof of true Egyptianism?

What kind of decadence is this that we witness in the new generation?

Why cannot national unity be achieved among the pious? By what shamelessness can we be required to give up our brethren in faith to their fate in a world full of gangsters and injustice? Why should we be accused of fanaticism whenever we listen to our brethren's cry for help, whereas they may cry as loud as they can: "Help, help! We, the Christian minority are in danger! Reactionism has returned to Egypt! and so forth; " whenever the slightest Islamic emotion stirs within us?

Only the Muslims are told: "No nationalism in religion; no religion in nationalism!"

While all kinds of obstacles are put between Muslims and their Koran and Sharf'ah, and while they are compelled by force to discard Islam, the Christian missionary activity waxes stronger, its budget grows larger, and it receives the backing of the occupation powers with all their armies and fleets. Dr. Zaghīb Mikhā'fī feels proud of America and writes: "The American people, despite all that is said to the contrary, are above all a religious people. They honor liberty, hate oppression, and revolt against tyranny..." The author of these words is a Copt from Sa'id; and yet, he feels proud enough of this Christian American spirit to boast of it.

He then addresses the Muslims of Egypt, exhorting them to give up Islam: "We want to imitate progressive Turkey, that Turkey which Kemal Ataturk has created, not the ancient Turkey which spread darkness, corrupted the nations, and destroyed civilization for over four centuries."

What does Dr. Zaghib want? He wants the self-same thing Salāmah Mūsa and his faction want, namely, the destruction of religion and religious people--in Dr. Zaghib's own words: "The separation of religion and state is the substance of the modern call to democracy. It was for this reason that Hitler and Mussolini returned religion to the state. So did Pétain in German-occupied France, and so do fascist Spain and Portugal up to the present day."

Thus, in their view, the recognition of religion as a basis for justice in the state is an evil and a thing of shame. In our view, however, though we are Muslims, a devout and pious Christian France is far better than a heathen France. It would give us joy to see in France, as well as in Egypt, religion, rather than disbelief and decadence, regarded as a basis of civilization. Since the majority in Egypt is Muslim, political rule must be founded upon Islam; and since the American majority is Christian, it is to be expected that Christianity will serve as a basis for rule in America. Minorities everywhere will have their own freedom of worship and will be protected.

The universalization of disbelief can never be accepted.

We now hear the vilest blasphemies directed against Islam, and we are keeping our passions in strict abeyance. We shall pursue our good program and not allow ourselves to be distracted by anything.

We shall soon see that there is still another motive behind Salāmah Mūsa's attempts to destroy Islamic rule.

\* \* \* \* \*

Communism completely severs religion from any aspect of public life. Imperialism, on the contrary, separates religion from the state only if the religion in question is Islam. Such a procedure is expected to bring about its decay and eventual death, particularly if foreign powers occupy its lands and control its people. But if the religion in question is Judaism, then it becomes good that the state identify itself

wholly with religion, that the state gather its subjects from all over the world. This is particularly praiseworthy if this Jewish state holds dominion over a region cut off from the Islamic body now lying in imperialistic chains.

If, instead, the religion in question is Christianity, it becomes imperative, irrespective of whether the state is officially separate from, or united with it, that religion decide the form of things in the country concerned. But in those countries where Christianity carries out missionary work, both the form and the content of activities must be controlled by the Christians themselves. Obviously, religion is here designed to complement and further the work of Western imperialism.

Thus, wherever we turn, it is always we who are the victims of attack.

Those who oppose religion in Egypt mean first and foremost to destroy Islam. If the destruction of Islam cannot be attained save by the pretense of wanting to destroy both Islam and Christianity, then that is the thing to do.

Some of the leaders of the Christian Church, however, cannot even follow this policy consistently. Outwardly, they advocate the official separation of religion and state, and behind the scene, they do everything in their power to deliver every government office into Christian hands. Thus they noiselessly gain control of the state machinery. The accursed English have no doubt been responsible for this Christian infiltration which is but one aspect of the conspiracy against Islam and its numerically superior adherents. Ever since they landed in Egypt, and throughout their occupation, they have been working towards that end. In a very few years the percentage of government offices occupied by Copts has risen to the following astounding figures: sixty per cent of the common posts, ninety per cent of all higher posts, and one hundred per cent of certain special posts, as in the Department of Finance.

This policy, of which we shall quote many attesting proofs from the publications of Salāmah Mūsa's party, is not the only example of its kind. As Palestine fell into the lap of the United Nations, and as UNRRA came to the relief of Arab refugees, we noticed that, as if with the necessity of a categorical imperative, a great part of the budget was spent on Christian staff officers. Whenever a Muslim was employed,

it was for an insignificant, lowly post; and even then, care was taken to choose the most decadent and dissolute candidate.

Clearly, then, it is a Crusader's hatred of Islam that is betrayed in all these cases. To expect Europe or America to follow another policy is utterly naive. But what is surprising is that every complaint we make against this policy is dubbed "criminal fanaticism"; in other words, we should see ourselves slaughtered and keep silent. Only thus may we satisfy Salāmah Mūsa and his wicked friends.

As soon as the percentage of Muslim-occupied posts in any government department increases a little, the whole sky reverberates with cries for help and accusations of reactionism and fanaticism. Immediately, Mūsa and his followers ask for an investigation of the Muslim Brotherhood's influence in that department; and at the same time, Patriarch Sergius threatens to migrate to Ethiopia.

Why? Must the majority remain condemned and forlorn, as British policy has prescribed? Must they live naive and stupid forever?

Dr. Zaghib writes: "A quarter of a century ago, about one half or even more of the post and railway officials were Copts. The efficiency, discipline, and probity of these two departments were exemplary, obviously because of this majority of Coptic employees."

Then what? Many school teachers, reports Zaghib, were transferred to the Post Department, and the original proportion of Copts was reduced. According to him, it was then that the sinister tragedy happened. "What was the result," he continues, "of this racial discrimination? The Department of Post and Railways became exemplary for their chaos, inefficiency, and bad service...and so forth."

The real cause, Zaghib would say, is the inferior intelligence and vitality of the Muslims!! He is not ashamed to call the Muslims stupid and lazy by nature. He becomes angry even at such declarations as the following: "Some papers," said the Minister of Justice, "have criticized the law courts because the Copts are not duly represented (a charge made by Salāmah Mūsa). The truth, however, is that the Copts occupy more posts than their numbers in the country entitle them to." The only explanation Zaghib can make of this is that the Copt geniuses have been disregarded,

and the mediocre Muslims have been advanced; for, he would like to argue, there are no Muslims sufficiently educated to fill the higher posts. But the truth is, that the entire organization of the law courts would not be acceptable to him unless all the Muslim officials were thrown out and their places taken by Copts.

The finance offices were occupied one hundred per cent by Copts. When this proportion was reduced to fifty per cent, a "hideous crime" was committed by the "blind, fanatic Muslims".

Likewise, when the Coptic students and professors in the School of Medicine were reduced from seventy per cent to forty per cent, the opposition shouted: "Woe to the Muslims who have fallen back into hateful reactionism." Thus, Dr. Zaghib writes: "The daily cries of the sick and of the suffering for assistance are only the consequence of this criminal and inhuman policy."

Have you heard this artificial cry? Have you recognized its pretentious voice? Have you grasped its hidden motives? Either Islam is officially separated from the state and the Christian minority rules the Muslim majority, or a still louder cry and more shameless attack shall be raised. If you should try to defend our cause, you are told to keep silent lest your people be accused of fanaticism.

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When Islam came to Egypt, some people accepted it; others refused it. None were under any coercion to do as they did. The opinion held by some that the others have done well to accept or to refuse God's religion is immaterial and has no immediate effects in this world. The truth or falsity of such an opinion will become evident only in the world to come. The Koran has taught us Muslims to take the following attitude towards those who disagree with Islam: "God is our Lord, and your Lord: unto us will our works be imputed: Let there be no wrangling between us and you; for God will assemble us all at the last day, and unto Him shall we return."

As to people's mode of life and other important matters, the Muslims are not inclined to be quarrelsome. They would never fight with those who respect their faith and do

not intervene in their affairs. "As to those who have not borne arms against you on account of religion, nor turned you out of your dwellings, God forbiddeth you not to deal kindly with them, or not to behave justly towards them; for God loveth those who act justly." Throughout the ages, Muslim theologians have agreed that the basis for the regulation of the relations of Muslims with non-Muslims is the principle of equal rights and obligations. In all Muslim countries this principle has been carefully observed, and in Egypt the Copts have enjoyed its advantages to the full. Indeed, we have even been accepting the fact that they enjoy more rights and fulfill fewer obligations than we, and in so doing have only illustrated our traditional tolerance and friendly disposition. But when some immoral and irreligious people take our good nature for stupidity and hence wish the religious minority to dominate us, we must perforce abandon the policy of kindness and adopt that of justice. What we now want is precisely this: to take possession of our complete rights and to give them theirs.

Let us consider the following example and then try to see whether the Muslims or the others are right.

In 1924, the Wafd Party represented the whole people. Among the important members and leaders of its purely nationalist policy were a number of Copts. When the Wafd Party drew up its list of candidates for the house of deputies, the result was that the Copts obtained 150 out of 214 seats, that is, three-fourths of the seats of the whole house, whereas the total Coptic population amounted to five per cent. Everybody was amazed at this plot prepared in the name of the unity of Cross and Crescent. Naturally the balance had to be slowly restored; but the enemies of justice rose again in protest. They began a campaign of intrigue and blasphemy and called upon the whole world to rescue them from the tyranny of Muslim Egypt, or rather from the "tyranny" of equality, justice, and mutual respect.

All that is demanded of Patriarch Sergius is a little equity; of Salāmāh, a little good breeding; and of Dr. Zaghib, a little sense of shame. And if this is not to be conceded, then why do they not show their true feelings and say boldly, "We would gladly sell Egypt to the devil rather than hear a Koranic verse recited!!!"

It is also surprising to hear these imposters complain

that Egypt puts limits upon church building. Dr. Zaghib, author of the complaint, comes from the village of abu-Qarqas. But it so happens that I myself worked in that village as a preacher for about a year. Despite the fact that the population of abu-Qarqas is seventy per cent Muslim and thirty per cent Coptic, there are two mosques and "only five" churches; in addition to these, it has a French missionary institution. Do we see there a proof of limitation, or of an extreme extravagance, in church building?

Undoubtedly, the whole storm is a fraud. We shall see how one of the more balanced Copts himself appreciates this gross nonsense repulsive to every orthodox believer. Dr. Hannā Hannā writes:

Some time ago, 'al-Waṭāniyah' magazine published an article for me in which I produced indubitable proof that the Egyptian Copts are the most fortunate minority in the world. No weight at all should be given to the claim that the Copts are the original inhabitants of Egypt; the original inhabitants of America were the redskins! The Coptic year called 'the martyrs' year' itself provides proof that when the Copts were the 'original inhabitants' of the land, they used to be slaughtered by the thousands like sheep. And whoever wishes to consult history may do so. It was a great gift of God that the Arabs conquered this land, for they treated our ancestors well and showered gifts and benefits of all kinds upon them. They granted the energetic among us much money and land until many became big landlords. The Copts are still wealthier than the other Egyptians in proportion to their numbers. This, too, is a decisive proof that the majority are tolerant and generous, for an oppressed minority can never become as wealthy and prosperous as, in fact, the Egyptian Copts are.

"There are a few complaints a certain author repeats so consistently in every issue of his paper that even the most nationalistic Copts have been bored to death with them. God knows that this parvenu seeks only to be a hero, but this is certainly not the way to become one. In sum, the complaints are as follows:

1. Inequality in government posts
2. Limits on church building
3. Religious education in government schools..."

After Dr. Hannā Hannā had analyzed these complaints and showed that they were devoid of foundation, he asserted that if any party had reason to complain, it should be the Muslims. In conclusion, he gave the author in question the following advice:

"Young man...heroism cannot be achieved in this dangerous way; and Christianity, which you pretend to serve, does not allow you to be blasphemous, or attack the noble 'guests'--if guests they be--so libellously and within the church itself. Nor does Christianity allow you to be so indecently aggressive on the day of peace, love, and fraternity. To permit your pen its present licence so that the state would try, judge, and imprison you, and thereby proclaim yourself a hero maltreated by your enemies, is a fantastic dream that will never come true. The truth which you must sooner or later realize is that you are not, and will never be, a hero."

## Chapter V

### WOMAN AND SOCIETY

The women of Quraysh are the best women there are.

A Hadith

Accursed are the men who imitate women and the women who imitate men.

A Hadith

#### 1.

### Woman and Society

Sheikh Khālid's chapter on women expressed in his warm and emphatic style some of the hopes and ideals of the Egyptian women's movement. Substantially, he defended these views:

1. That women well deserve complete rights to an education, and particularly to a university education on a par with men.
2. That women should receive even more than they have so far obtained, and that they should be granted scholarships for foreign study.
3. That women should be granted their political rights and should be allowed to become members of parliament, judges, ministers, soldiers, officers, and so on.

This is a summary of Sheikh Khālid's views. Before we analyze it from the standpoint of religion, we must first emphasize some of his unscholarly statements. Addressing the so-called reactionaries he says: "Therefore, never say, 'If your women are the authors of your decisions, then you may as well not exist at all.'"

This statement which Sheikh Khālid wants us to omit from our speech is part of a well-known Hadith of the Prophet, which reads as follows: "If your princes are genuinely distinguished, your men of wealth generous and benevolent, and

if your affairs are decided by all of you in council, then the world will appear good to you. But if your princes are evil, your men of wealth parsimonious, and if your women are the authors of your decisions, then you may as well not exist at all."

The Hadith means to point out that in a dictatorship--which is the opposite of a consultative form of government--the personality of the individual dictator stands above the whole people; and in such a polity, women inevitably play a concealed role in public affairs, as is only too often the case. We certainly should like to strengthen our community with educated women, but we should be alarmed to see women take over the reins of government--this would be unnatural. Even in those lands that have fully recognized the rights of women, matters have not reached such extremes. And Russia, where this doctrine arrived at its ultimate conclusion, has not yet seen a woman of the calibre of Stalin or Molotov.

The great burdens and responsibilities of humanity together with the task of orienting history have always fallen to men rather than to women. In the Security Council, the United Nations Organization, the cabinets of the various governments of the world, and in the realms of science and literature, very few women have ever attained positions of leadership. Many more women, perhaps, have attained positions just below those of leadership. But this is an argument neither for nor against women.

However, the author of "From Here We Start" makes very rash statements about the problem of women. "The spiritual vision," he writes, "of the majority of us men is too narrow to comprehend woman's cause;" and he says of his opponents, "Their questions betray such a degree of naiveté that we need not worry about their opposition to this most promising movement."

He considers that the equality of men and women demands that a woman have the right to discipline her husband, as the husband has the right to discipline his wife.

He calls his opponents "petrified and reactionary" and says: "Woman has not put her hand to any job without achieving real wonders in it. Her fight during the plague was a glorious achievement, and its brilliance shines to this very day."

These exaggerations vitiate Sheikh Khālid's arguments. What wonders? Would that this lie were true! We should then hand over our problems to women and rest content.

Sheikh Khālid then criticized the government's decision not to send women students to study in foreign countries. He wrote: "An important cabinet minister stopped, thought the matter over, then estimated, then reconsidered his judgment, frowned, scowled, then weighed all views, concentrated, and finally pronounced the sealed judgment that woman students could not be granted scholarships for foreign study despite the fact that foreign countries can give us knowledge it is impossible to obtain in our own universities and colleges. With what right can we thwart woman's intellectual ambition and allow man's free rein?"

Regarding women's travelling to the outside world without escort, Islam's viewpoint is well-known to all. It is based on the principle laid down by the Prophet, namely, "A woman who believes in God and the Day of Judgment may not travel a whole day and night's distance without escort." The Prophet said, "No woman may be left alone with a man without a chaperon." And when one of the men present retorted, "My wife must have done that, for I have been absent from home on such and such campaign...", the Prophet answered, "Go to pilgrimage and take your wife also. Thus you will both be purified." This principle is unquestionable and must be observed; but Sheikh Khālid, the 'alim from al-Azhar, completely overlooked it. He asked that our women students be sent alone to Europe and America where woman's honor comes cheaper than the cheapest commodity. Has he not heard that a woman scholar once married a foreigner; and that, once freed from restraint, many family women have violated every standard of religious piety and good breeding with utmost ease? How many scandals has our innocent religion had to suffer at the hands of those women who would not observe its mores? Sheikh Khālid wants Egypt to have her own "Madame Curie", but is this the way to bring up such "mesdames"? Madame Curie had a Monsieur Curie with whom she cooperated in the service of science. But what Sheikh Khālid suggests is a dangerous, unfruitful, and unbecoming expedient.

## 2.

Woman's Awakening and the Oriental  
and Western Traditions

In the light of this brief survey of Sheikh Khālid's views, the reader may have suspected that we are hostile to woman, anxious to paralyze her and congeal her endowments; whereas the truth is that we are the first to appreciate the role that woman must play in society and the care that should be taken in preparing her for this role. We realize that woman is an integral part of society, a part of which the paralysis must result in paralyzing society itself. In spite of this, however, we must say that, up to now, Egyptian thought concerning woman has been unstable, oscillating from one extreme to the other, but never standing still at the happy mean demanded by Islam.

Some of us constrain woman with the traditions of the East; others give her the licence of the West. On one side, it is narrow-mindedness and chains; on the other, absolute freedom and libertinage. Both factions use the holy books of Islam for support and authority. In truth, Islam is far from either side. Let us then examine the claims of each.

The most important Oriental traditions of the first can be summarized as follows:

1. Because of her physical constitution, woman occupies an inferior position. Man is unconditionally superior.

2. Woman's *raison d'être* is limited to sensual pleasure and reproduction. Hence, her rights and duties should not transcend the emotional and intellectual scope of this *raison d'être*.

3. The standard of woman's personality and moral worth shall be her chastity alone, whereas in the case of man, the standard shall include other and more important values.

These three traditional principles give rise to a whole system of detailed manners and customs to which woman is inevitably and ruthlessly subjected. The tragedy of this system is that its adherents think it is part and parcel of Islam itself.

The women's organizations that presumably are opposed by Islam are really opposed by these traditions which they mistake as being those of Islam

On the other hand, the Western traditions are:

1. Absolute equality of men and women in everything.  
2. The foundation of society upon the free and complete association of the sexes.

3. The consideration of sexual life as something absolutely private and subject to the person's own free choice and natural inclinations.

These Western traditions have many admirers among us who enthusiastically spread them about. Our society is gradually being dragged down by them. Sheikh Khālid exhorts the Egyptian women's movement to advance quickly and boldly to the position women's movements in the West have achieved.

The causes of Western traditions having spread so wildly in our midst are:

1. The evil effects of the prevalent Oriental traditions.  
2. The influence of armed Western imperialism.  
3. The purely negative attitude of al-Azhar 'ulama and Islamic organizations towards the Western traditions.

We cannot point to a single positive act or suggestion on the part of these organs of Islam that would provide a genuine Islamic solution to the problem of woman. The keenest 'alim writes an article or delivers a speech and then goes home to stand helpless and resigned in the face of the problem itself. The Western conduct of the members of his own family gives the lie to his pretentious objections.

Not one of them has built up an exemplary institution for educating women. Not one has even designed a decent dress for them to wear. Not one has come forth with so much as a suggestion as to how women should spend their spare time. Not one has drawn up a program for women's service to home and fatherland. They have all been satisfied merely to shout in protest. Some of them have even advised that women should be locked up in their homes, by this means doing away with the problem once and for all. Were the consequences of their nonsense to be personally imputed to them, they would be grave enough to provide the punishment deserved. But they join their vociferations with the words of Islam and would probably accuse the latter if matters were brought to a showdown. Islam itself, therefore, should first be distinguished from both Oriental and Western nonsense.

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Woman's problem is not one that concerns us but lightly. It is the problem of our mothers, sisters, and daughters. We are obliged to consider it with the utmost sympathy and with deep concern. It is the problem of half the nation, of the indispensable half. If this half should degenerate physically or spiritually, the whole nation would degenerate to no less an extent. Then, too, it is the problem of Islam itself, which the people have misinterpreted and abused, and which the world has come to regard as a religion that grants woman neither liberty, nor dignity, nor education, but recognizes her only as a means for man's pleasure and reproduction.

It is not true that Islam regards woman as being inferior to man on account of her physical constitution. Many a woman is superior to man because she surpasses him in intellectual endowment or moral conduct. Beards and mustaches carry no weight on the scales of personal excellence. Mariam, daughter of 'Imrān, and 'Āishah, daughter of abu-Bakr, were far superior to many men.

God has declared men and women equal in all moral endeavor. "Their Lord therefore answereth them, saying, I will not suffer the work of him among you who worketh to be lost, whether he be male, or female: the one of you is from the other." Man's innate physical and moral characteristics are passed on to his daughters as well as to his sons. It is not the case that the sons inherit the higher qualities and the daughters, the lower. All children are equally endowed, and it is through nurture that their later moulds are made. It is always the excellence of the perfected individual, whether male or female, that merits God's love and blessing.

It is immaterial that God gave the family a special form and internal order and placed man in the position of leadership. Man's responsibilities are far greater than woman's. Every business concern must have a head, upon whom devolves the duty of directing and orienting it. Even if the concern should be a partnership of two men, it would still fail unless one of the partners took actual command of its affairs. It is for this reason that man is regarded as being prior to woman, although this statement should not be omitted --his duties and rights are the same as hers. Such is the essence of God's saying, "The women ought also to behave towards their husbands in like manner as their husbands

should have towards them, according to what is just: but the men ought to have a superiority over them."

This superiority is purely a dictate of worldly efficiency. Otherwise, we must perforce regard Noah's wife as greater than he, and Pharaoh's wife likewise, which is absurd. Family leadership belongs to man by divine arrangement, and it is in this respect that man is given priority. Moral superiority and excellence, genuine moral worth, is as much possible to man as it is to woman. Only God can judge whether a man or his wife is "better".

The concept, therefore, of the supposed inferiority of woman as such in Islam is pure fiction and should be completely discarded.

On the other hand, the marked difference in the physical, mental, and emotional constitution of man and woman is a brute fact. In man, there is a preponderance of thinking, of resoluteness, and of will power. In woman, there is a preponderance of passion and sensitivity, of a stronger moral sense, and a higher degree of affection. Man is more strongly built than woman. Men's bodies are nearer to beauty and specific perfection than those of women. This is true not only in case of humans, but equally of all other species. The lion is more beautiful than the lioness, the rooster than the hen, and so on.

This physical distinction between male and female is embedded in nature itself, and it is required according to the laws of life.

We must at once qualify the foregoing statement. It is not the case that every woman is physically inferior to every man. Just as some women have better minds than some men, so other women may have superior physical constitutions. The lioness is still superior to the horse, the mule, and the donkey. Nature does not discriminate in its gifts. A woman may be superior in all respects to many men; but it is not unlikely that she may be inferior to her own father, brothers, or sons.

In the Sunnah, the tradition that women are inferior to men in respect to religion and the intellect has been unequivocally explained without prejudice to woman's position in nature or society. Woman, it is known, is exempted from prayer for a number of days every month, and from fasting for an equal number of days in Ramadan. The imperfection



of worship resulting from this is what is meant by "religious inferiority".

Islam further considers that it takes the testimony of two women to counterbalance that of one man. The reason for this is the natural fact that woman is more forgetful than man. Her stronger emotions take possession of her mind more often and more completely than is the case with man; and this aspect of her nature, it is well known, has been responsible for many family disturbances. Woman is ordinarily such that if her husband once maltreats her, she immediately forgets all his good behavior in the past. It is only wise that the law took care to demand two testimonies where otherwise one might have sufficed. In this way, if one witness goes astray, it is nearer certainty that the second will not do so at the same time. This is what is meant by the so-called "woman's inferiority of intellect".

In these times, however, woman has achieved many far-reaching and consequential freedoms. She has found admirers to say, "You are stronger and more intelligent than man, if not his equal." But the truth is what we have just proclaimed. Nothing else can avail.

Finally, whatever may be said, Islam has regarded woman most favorably. If she is a mother, then "Paradise is at her feet"; if she is a child, then "to educate her is surely to escape hellfire"; if she is a wife, then "her husband's goodness and dignity lie in loving and protecting her." Can then Islam be said to have assigned woman a position of inferiority in society?

### 3.

#### Woman's Social Duty

I wish to postpone for awhile a discussion of the veil and of the segregation of women. I would rather draw my reader's attention to the pillars of religion itself in respect to which women, as well as men, are held responsible by God. There is nothing demanded of a Muslim man, or regarded as noble and good by a Muslim people, that is not also demanded or expected of a Muslim woman, except certain specific and obvious duties from which religion has exempted her.

It is, rather, the traditions of the East that consigned women to mere pleasure and reproduction. It is the East, not Islam, that regards the imprisonment of women in their homes as a duty. These traditions do not regard it as a duty for women ever to observe prayer, and the fact is that ninety per cent of our veiled women do not pray at all; nor do they know of the other duties of Islam any more than their names.

When woman began to go out of her dwelling for work or for pleasure, the men of religion sought to return her to the home without suggesting the slightest improvement in her daily program. When they failed in their attempt, all they could do was to curse her. Whereas the advocates of her freedom lead her to a modern Jahiliyah, the advocates of her imprisonment lead her to an ancient, but equally evil, Jahiliyah. Meanwhile, the fight between the two camps continues. Both are equally ignorant of Islam, and the victory of neither party will profit the cause of religion.

### 4.

#### The Test of Faith Comes First

When some Muslim-born women married Copts or Christian Americans, a great tumult was raised, and the believers regarded such unusual conduct as a departure from Islam and a denial of its law. The protests found the ears of these women dumb, for their hearts were devoid of any faith in, or respect for, Islam. Naturally, a faithless woman would not care what man she married. If he happened to be a Muslim, it would be pure coincidence; his religious affiliation would not matter at all. As the poet ibn-'Arabi discovered, the religion of such women is that of love, their "only God".

This satanic "religion of love" is not that of women-in-love alone; unfortunately, it is also that of many leaders in various fields. Such wickedness cannot be cured except by the return of faith to their corrupted hearts. Those who are genuinely interested in our women's fate must therefore seek first to re-educate them.

Today, we see many so-called pious young men draw our attention to some unveiled, painted, and otherwise

conspicuous women on the streets. Personally, the sight of these women repels me. They look to me more like painted mummies, and their manicured fingernails appear like the claws of a wild beast.

Under Islam, woman, like man, is supposed to pray a set number of times during the day, between dawn and a little after sunset. This task puts woman under the obligation of washing her face and hands with pure water an equal number of times. But modern women prefer to paint themselves instead. Anxious to avoid this issue, the advocates of female emancipation raise, per contra, the question of whether or not women may adorn themselves at all.

## 5.

## Woman and the Mosque

Islam provided strong links between the life of women and the right of the mosque. This tradition of close relationship has proved highly inconvenient to false zealots and men of evil temperament both in ancient times and today. Abdullah ibn-Omar is said to have reported the following anecdote: "The Prophet said, 'If your women ask you for permission' to go to the mosque, you should always grant it.' Upon hearing this, Balāl (son of Abdullah ibn-Omar) said, 'By God, we shall deny them this permission.' His father severely reproved him for this impertinence and even disowned him."

Women used to enter the mosque through the same door as men, until the Prophet saw fit to assign a special door for their entrance. Abdullah ibn-Omar reported that the Prophet said, "We shall reserve this gate for women only." Thereupon, Nāfi' resolved never to enter through that gate as long as he lived. The Prophet used to order the ranks of praying believers in the mosque, to incite the men to stand in the front rows and the women to take the back rows. Obviously, his motive was to give prayer the most undisturbed mood and atmosphere possible, so that worship could take place in candor and with concentration. Speaking of prayer at the mosque, the Prophet recommended that "The best rows for men are the front ones and the worst are those in the back, and vice versa for women."

Women used to leave the mosque first, so that they would

not be caught in the rush. Furthermore, they were commanded to keep their prayer movements a little behind those of the praying men. Asmā', daughter of abu-Bakr, reported that the Prophet had commanded her, saying, "Whoever believes in God and the Day of Judgment should not rise from prostration before all the men have done so."

But Islam also realized that woman's occupation at home, the nature of her role in the life of society, and her relation to her children make it hard, it not impossible, for her to go to the mosque for prayer five times a day. In true appreciation of her position, Islam declared woman's prayer at home more worthy than her prayer in the mosque, and yet reserved for her the right to go to the mosque as often as she could. In the time of the Prophet, women used to go to the mosque on Fridays to hear the sermon. Umm-Hishām, daughter of Hārithah, said that she learned a certain surah directly from the Prophet as he used to recite it every Friday from the pulpit. This proves that she went to the mosque on Fridays.

On feast days, the Prophet used to command the Muslims to bring their women to the mosque so that they might participate in worship and hear the sermon.

Indeed, the Prophet even commanded women to borrow a dress in case they did not have one presentable enough to wear to the feast prayer. His concern over the close relation of women to their society was deep enough not to allow them to miss its greatest and most stately reunion.

## 6.

## Some Relevant Theological Texts

Following is a typical complaint of a pious, but untutored Muslim woman, as published by the press: "In a magazine published by a religious institution, I once read the assertion that a woman should not show her face. Would, then, a woman showing her face, but otherwise perfectly dressed, who went to the mosque for prayer or for hearing a sermon, be guilty of an ungodly crime?"

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Al-Shāfi'i reported abu-Yūsuf as saying: "I have found our leaders in knowledge accusing those whom they disliked and censured of departure from Islam. But the truth is that only what the Koran has unequivocally declared to be such is a departure from Islam." Ibn-Muflīh reported that ibn-Taymiyah, Sheikh of Islam, said our predecessors called "prohibited", or a "crime", only that which God has commanded us absolutely not to do.

Consequently, to accuse people boldly of disobedience to God when their acts admit of various interpretations is the practice of the untutored. An instance is the rule that women must not show their faces. It is simply ignorance and lack of good sense that is betrayed in such a judgment. Many Muslim theologians of great reputation would see no wrong in the above-mentioned proposal and answer the inquiring lady in the affirmative.

On this subject, ibn-Hazm quotes the Koran: "...and discover not their ornaments, except what necessarily appeareth thereof: and let them throw their veils over their bosoms, and not show their ornaments, unless to their husbands..."

Thus, the face of a woman is not supposed to be covered. Otherwise, the Koran would have mentioned it along with the other parts of a woman's body that should be concealed. "And let them not make a noise with their feet, that their ornaments which they hide may thereby be discovered," the Koran says on another occasion. Here, too, it is clearly shown that the feet and the legs ought to be covered. Abd al-Rahmān ibn-Abdullah ibn-Khālid reported that ibn-'Abbās said he attended a feast prayer with the Prophet and the latter came to the praying women and delivered another sermon to them. The women threw their contributions for the cause of Islam in the robe of Balāl which he spread for that purpose. Thus, the Prophet undoubtedly saw both the women's faces and their hands; and since he did not reprove them for showing their hands, we may conclude that he was agreeable to their doing so.

Sulayman ibn-Yasār reported that ibn-'Abbās told him a woman from Khat'am asked for the Prophet's opinion on the subject of the last pilgrimage, while al-Faḍl ibn-'Abbās was present. When al-Faḍl turned to look at the woman's quite attractive countenance, the Prophet tried simply to

draw al-Faḍl's attention to something else, but did not command the woman to cover her face.

Aḥmad ibn-Hanbal reported that 'Ā'ishah told how the Abyssinians were playing in the Prophet's court on a feast day, and had said: "I watched as long as I pleased over his shoulders and he leaned over a little to make it easier for me." In this and similar Hadiths, the case was made for the legality of women's seeing what is not improper to see of men's bodies and movements--though with lowered eyes and modest gaze. Al-Nuwway, one of the most strict Shāfi'i jurists, held, to the contrary, that no man should see any woman, and no woman any man. Now the Hadith of 'Ā'ishah explains that she was very young, but ibn-Hajar criticized al-Nuwway, contending that the arrival of the Abyssinian delegation took place in the eighth year after the Hegira, long after the Prophet had married her. How, then, can it be said that she was very young when she was of marriageable age? A contemporary writer claimed that the members of the Abyssinian delegation were themselves below the age of puberty, but this contention does not even merit consideration.

Al-Nuwway cites as proof for his argument the story concerning umm-Salmah and Maymūnah. When the Prophet commanded them to veil themselves from Abdullah ibn-umm-Maktūm, they said to him, "Is he not blind and unable to see us?" He replied, "Are the two of you blind and unable to see him?"

Concerning this same matter, ibn-Hajar said, at the beginning of "al-Bāri", that the command to veil from ibn-umm-Maktūm was, perhaps, out of fear that the blind man would do something he did not intend to do:

The Hadith just mentioned is satisfactory in one aspect: its authenticity is unquestionable--it is among the Hadiths related by al-Bukhārī and Muslim\*--but its rank does not put it in the same class with those benefiting from the authorization of a vision. A far stronger Hadith than this one, however, is that of Faṭimah, the daughter of Qays, who was commanded by the Prophet to keep her personal effects and household goods in the house of the same ibn-umm-Maktūm. "He is a blind man; keep your things at his house."

\*The two most important of the six early authoritative compilers of Hadith.

In the "Salfh" (a sound and well-documented collection, according to al-Munthari) and other compilations of Hadiths made by abu-Da'ūd, the Hadith of umm-Salmah is applied specifically to the wives of the Prophet, and that of Fātimah, the daughter of Qays, to all women.

In fact, the recommendation of complete veiling for the women of the Prophet, according to abu-Da'ūd's interpretation, is well substantiated in the existing traditions. It is close to the Prophet's own statement to the women: "You are not like other women, if you know how to behave." (That is, if you know how to behave yourselves, you don't have to veil.) This opinion, however, is complicated by the absence of a denial to women of the right to prayer in the mosque. Ibn-Hazm said: "It is not permitted to the guardian or the husband of a woman to prevent her from attending prayer in a group at the mosque, if he knows that she is going to say the prayers. She should not, however, be permitted to go out of the house merely for amusement or to wear fine clothes; if she does so, she should be forbidden. Women's prayers in the group are more pleasing in the sight of God than those said alone. Contradicting those who believed it is better for women to pray at home, ibn-Hazm went on to say: "If their prayers at home were better, the Prophet would not have suggested a task that neither increases nor decreases their virtue. This would not have been sincere and good advice on the part of the Prophet, and Islam is called the 'religion of sincerity'. Had he wished to forbid going outside the home for any purposes whatsoever, he would not have enacted any obligation except to prohibit entirely, and would not otherwise have commanded women to go out unadorned; still less would he have made this a reprehensible matter."

Continuing, ibn-Hazm stated, in refutation of those who claim that women's prayers are better said at home: "Those who oppose this contention will stir up trouble by referring to the Prophet's saying to umm-Hamīd that her prayers at home were better than her prayers with him. Now, no one knows the origin of this Hadith, and a narration with successive proofs ought not to be discarded for an unknown one. Granting the soundness of the reports affirming that prayer in the home is better, this is contradicted by the Prophet's command that the women, even those who might be in

seclusion, go out to attend the prayers on a feast day. He also commanded that whoever did not have an outer garment should borrow one for this occasion. All the people of the earth agree that the Prophet never prohibited women from saying prayers with him in the mosque to the day he died, nor did the Orthodox Caliphs after him. Thus, it is undeniable that his action remained valid as precedent.

"Al-Zahari says that 'Atikah, daughter of Zayd ibn-Omar ibn-Nafl, was under the jurisdiction of Omar ibn-al-Khaṭṭāb and used to attend prayers in the mosque. Omar used to say to her, 'Don't you ever learn that I do not like this?' She answered, 'I will not stop until you forbid me to do it.' And he replied, 'I do not forbid you.' And she was in the mosque on the day he was stabbed.

"Furthermore, from 'Abd al-Rāziq we learn that ibn-abi-Tālib used to command the people to observe Ramadan, and he had an imam for the men and an imam for the women."

إمامة (Mahalli sect.) Ibn-Hazm concludes with a summary in regard to the of the Hanafites and the Malikites, who believe prayers at home are better for women; but these learned distinctions are irrelevant to our purposes here.

What we do wish to make clear, is that women, when they go out of the home, should be fully dressed but not over-dressed or over-adorned. Showing their faces is not a sin as long as they are not painted or perfumed. The Muslim jurists do not claim it is improper to see the face, unless a law should be passed imposing the veil. The purpose in enacting legislation to this effect would be to keep women from undue interference and avoid the possibility of temptation; and in truth we are anxious to keep temptation away from the people by any judicious means. We wish, however, to benefit them without unnecessary compulsion or constraint. We have seen societies that use the veil overcome by dissolution and anarchy; and we have observed without misgivings villages in which the women are unveiled. The Hadith of Asmā', daughter of abu-Bakr, says that when a woman reaches puberty, nothing should be seen of her except the face and hands. This Hadith affords unambiguous guidance and from the authoritative standpoint it is equal to that of veiling, since both of them are considered sound. The Hadith of Asmā', however, agrees with the verses and

“AL-MAHALLI”

NAME OF IBN HAZM'S BOOK

narrations of al-Bukhāri and Muslim, which the Hadith of the veil does not.

A contemporary author explained the Hadith of Asmā', saying that it applied only within the house. This is erroneous, since obviously in the house a woman may uncover not only her face but any part of the body she wishes. We advise members of the Islamic Society to learn about Islam before they call upon it for proofs, for sincerity added to ignorance ends only in the worst tragedies.

## 7.

## Woman and Public Manners

Once we realize Islam does not condemn woman to life imprisonment, perhaps the first question that occurs to us is: How should woman go out of her home and what should be her attire? Does the corruption of modern society annul woman's right to go out of her home?

We shall now try to answer. Corruption and licence in these times have reached an extreme limit. It is a pity that the men of today have neither manners nor fear, and that the women, instead of discouraging men through their chastity and decency, do the very opposite.

The clothes of which virtue approves are well-known. They mirror the moral state, dignity, and self-respect of the person who wears them. Categorically, Islam does not tolerate the uncovering of arms, legs and breasts, or the wearing of transparent or semi-transparent clothes.

Asmā', daughter of abu-Bakr, once entered the Prophet's presence wearing a sheer dress. The Prophet refused to receive her and said: "O Asmā', women should not show of their bodies any more than their face and hands."

The Koran has explicitly commanded the covering of the head, the breast and the inner adornments. Actually, the clothes of Christian sisters and nuns, and those of the village women of Manufiyah and Sharqiyah districts, are the closest approximation to the requirements of Islam.

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Granted the purity of her motives, a woman may watch

men as much as she wishes. The Prophet used to show his wife 'A'isha the Abyssinians performing their military drill in the mosque. Everyone, whether man or woman, is naturally expected to behave decently and avoid temptation. Women in particular are required to be reserved in their conversation and to discourage their interlocutors from tempting them. "...Be not too complaisant in speech," the Koran warns them, "lest he should covet, in whose heart is a disease of incontinence."

A woman's house is her fortress; nobody may force his way into it. She should never be found alone with a foreigner, whether in her home or outside it. "It is your woman's duty towards you not to allow in your home any person you do not wish to enter into it." "A woman should not be found alone with a man but must have a chaperon."

The Prophet forbade the women of his house to see ibn-umm-Māktūm, an invalid, in the latter's residence, lest it should happen that he become uncovered and the women be embarrassed, for he would be unable to re-cover himself. And when a woman has to go out on the street, it is better that she does not flaunt herself and cause a public demonstration.

Abu-Usayd reported that, when the Prophet once left the mosque and found men and women crowding the streets together, he addressed the women: "Stay behind; you may not crowd the roads with the men; but you may walk close to the wall on the sidewalks."

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As long as woman is decently dressed, she may leave her home and go out to the mosque, to the school, or pursue any other lawful purpose.

There is no unambiguous text demanding the covering of the face. Some theologians advise against showing the face as a precautionary measure against temptation and corruption. We do not think this is a very efficient means of precaution, and we consider the Muslims must have adopted it at a time of weakness and indecision. Training men and women for virtue requires a program, more comprehensive and positive, and based upon evident and sound religious texts.

(According to Islam, adultery is as grave a crime as

polytheism, and the roads leading to it are barricaded as heavily as possible. The measures designed to discourage and uproot the evil are as strict in the one case as in the other. The situation here is exactly opposite to that in the West, where everything is designed to encourage both evils at once. Westerners feel so proud of their women that they even encourage them to make exhibitions of themselves.

Islam condemns these sensual proclivities of the West and combats them everywhere.

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Indeed, nowadays every Muslim should be doubly cautious. He should safeguard his integrity at all times. Since Islamic law is not fully applied in these countries and since the partial fulfillment of it cannot be long maintained without support from other regions, we should be all the more careful to strengthen our resistance.

The roving eyes of sensual young men gaze hungrily, and encounter no restraint. Gossip is rife and uncontrolled. The very leaders and rulers to whom we could utter complaints are sold out to Europe, moulded after her pattern, and appointed by her to rule in our midst.

Even if the Islamic laws were to be applied in full, women would still be ill-advised if they were told to leave their homes, since there is at present no true guardianship. What is really required is a complete transformation of the situation as a whole.

#### 8.

#### Woman and the Judiciary

When a number of women asked to become judges and requested the right of filling other public offices, long discussions took place in which Islam was argued as having at one time tolerated, and another time denied, this right to women.

We are only amused by this futile controversy. Islam categorically forbids usury and adultery, yet people overlook its sacred commands. It requires us to pray and be virtuous, yet people have discarded prayer and follow their passions alone. When such as these inquire about Islam's attitude

regarding anything, we have a perfect right to suspect their motives.

However, for the benefit of the others who are genuinely anxious to observe the Islamic law when they know it, we shall analyze the attitude Islam takes towards woman's right to sit as a judge and to occupy other public offices.

The first fact facing us is that Islam has considered woman's testimony as equal to half the worth of a man's. Under Islam, the testimony of one woman is unacceptable, and her testimony in cases relating to the prohibitions is not acceptable at all. How then could she become a judge when her competence as a witness is denied on principle?

The second point is that the court of justice is a traditional institution endowed with respect. Upon the judge falls a heavy burden of responsibility and general leadership, which it is impossible to expect Islam to demand of woman when it has denied her leadership in the narrower and less important sphere of the home.

The third point is that although woman enjoys a complete right to manage her own legal and financial affairs and to choose her husband, yet she cannot, by that token, be allowed to manage the affairs of the whole people. This is why the Prophet asserted, when informed that the Persians had elected a queen to rule over them; "No people will succeed who give their command to a woman."

Fourthly, it is a law of nature that woman will remain the "left hand" of humanity while man is its "right hand". Her work and duty at home will always surpass in importance her work outside it. Man will have to carry the greater burdens and responsibilities in both private and public life; he is preordained for that role.

It is not by accident that God has never sent a woman prophet, nor is it by accident that the pages of history are filled with the names of men while those of women seldom appear.

Though there has never been a prophetess, however, woman has been a good wife to a prophet. She has been able to help him convey his message and lead men. Why then may she not devote her energies to complement man and perfect his work? Why must she stand on a par with him and compete with, instead of perfecting him?

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It is regrettable that some women believe Islam thinks ill of them and denies them the honor, dignity, or position due them. This is never the case. Women are still the sisters of men, and they are naturally endowed with such title to protection and respect as would guarantee their security and happiness. For Islam to allow them to become judges and ministers is a departure from nature and is prejudicial to worldly interest. Mme. 'Azīzah 'Abbās 'Asfūr, attorney-at-law, has known the tremendous responsibilities and burdens of public life; she has written the following article as a warning for womankind:

If it were a real gain for women to have the Minister of Justice appoint them as public attorneys with jurisdiction over juvenile delinquencies, I should have been the first to congratulate them. But as an old graduate of the School of Law and a very successful attorney-at-law, I declare frankly that the work of a lawyer or of a public attorney runs counter to woman's nature and interest. I should abhor seeing the rest of our cultured women obliged to go through my bitter experience. I appeal to them to save themselves from a tragic experience which it is impossible to avoid once such a career is begun. They have only their happiness to lose.

We lawyers have suffered the breaking of our nerves from the Sturm und Drang of our profession. Everything we do runs counter to our nature. What would be the fate of women public attorneys?

The woman lawyer is still mistress of her time and circumstances. She is free to manage her work as she wishes, to accept or refuse to take up this or that case.

But the woman public attorney has neither the will nor the power to choose the time and place of her work, nor can she turn down any case that is presented to her office.

What would be the inevitable consequence if a woman public attorney responded to her natural calling, married, and had children? Her work would certainly take her away from her house as is the case with every worker away from home, with the result that her husband would have to stay there by himself to bring up the children and "nurse" the babies.

Do our colleagues, the women law students, think that the work of a public attorney for juvenile delinquents is a mere pampering and playing with children? Do they not know that, like every other public attorney's job, this position involves the investigation of all sorts of crimes, including violations of every standard of decency, and such other felonies as pertain to women's honor? That a woman public attorney will find herself in many embarrassing situations? That she will have to cross-examine the culprits and witnesses in public? That the uprightness of the cross-examination demands that she put aside her sense of shame and speak publicly in bold and frank terms?

Could a woman public attorney, furthermore, carry out her investigation behind a screen, or apologize and not carry it out at all, or send a deputy to do it for her? Could she overlook the embarrassing questions and points that might be raised, and thereby prejudice the course of justice? Or would she, rather, cast away her nature and dignity--and thereby, her reputation and moral character--and perform her duties as they ought to be performed?

We women lawyers can always, and often do, refuse such challenging cases; but a woman public attorney cannot do so.

What would a woman public attorney do if she were transferred to some distant post, far from her family, where there were few conveniences and social life consisted only of government officials' gatherings? Would she adapt herself to such an environment or demand that she stay in the city, thus violating the very principle of equality that she now seeks?

Our religion, morals, traditions, and customs all demand that woman live far from temptation and sin. For her to mingle with all kinds of people would no doubt expose her to imminent dangers and make her the subject of gossip.

We women lawyers have not been spared from gossip and accusations of all kinds, even on the part of our colleagues, the men-lawyers. The successful woman lawyer, they say, has used her femininity to unfair advantage, and the person who takes her for his defense

counsel does so in order to humiliate his opponent by having "even a woman crush him".

But I wish to ask, How many were the women law graduates? How many of them took to law practice? How many of these have been able to establish themselves successfully in the profession? And would the number justify new legislation enabling them to become public attorneys and lead the life such people live? The Minister of Justice knows what hard work a public attorney must do. When His Excellency was himself a lawyer, he saw the difficult circumstances under which they carry on their work. Consequently, he realizes that women law students voiced this demand only under the passing pressure of rash ambition, and that they were too blind to see the tragic consequences. A woman's fate is, and should be, that of a mother, wife, mistress of the home, or a respected spinster. Nature does not require of her to be an attorney or an ambassador.

A woman's message and mission in life is sacred and majestic on its own merit. It lies beyond any right obtained or concession received.

This mission is to be a good wife and mother in whose arms should mature the future of the beloved fatherland.

A naive peasant woman with a child in her lap is far better for the nation than a thousand women lawyers or public attorneys.

A woman's role in life can be far greater than that of man if she remains at home and sits upon her throne therein. For it is she who presents to mankind its new man after having kneaded and moulded him out of her flesh. The whole of mankind is only a woman's fruit; its entire life is derived from hers.

Let me whisper to you, women public attorneys: "A man's appreciation of the capability of a professional woman never equals his love and reverence for the perfect wife. A perfect wife is that great being in whose shade man finds his true blessedness. The purpose of nature in you, and God's wisdom in your creation, is that you be mothers, not public attorneys or lawyers."

Is not John Simon right in this statement: "Life is easy and pleasant if both men and women know the place that God assigned to each."

## 9.

## Woman and Education

The first purpose of real education is the development of mind, the cultivation of talent, the correction of man's Weltanschauung, and the disciplining of his emotions in accordance with conceptions of right and duty.

Men and women are equally in need of a great deal of education. Intellectual, social, and political illiteracy constitutes a great danger to either sex.

Education is not a luxury a person may do without. It is an absolute necessity, the lack of which is a most undesirable degradation. We should, therefore, not only allow our women the right to an education, but try to induce them to gain more and more of it, however contented they may be with their share. Herein, the same applies to woman as applies to man.

At present, the moral and intellectual level of women is below that of men. In many Oriental countries care is taken to keep women in ignorance and maintain their spiritual life at a low level. This is a crime. Whoever studies Muslim society in its early days will notice that the educational standards of men and women, and their abilities to understand public affairs and interests, were almost identical. That was the consequence of the equal religious obligations of both. Today, however, when the youth are being called to fight the Palestine war, mother, sister, and wife all join in asking, What is this Palestine, and why in the world should we have to send our men there? This happens at a time when our own men meet every day the enemy women of Israel fighting like heroes.

Naturally, the ignorant woman is incapable of appreciating any public or national problem. She is as incapable of even supervising the bringing up of her children, as an ignorant man would be. The only cure for this degradation is the spread of education.

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It is strange that our colleges and institutions of higher education are co-educational whereas our elementary and



secondary schools are not. Why should there be no women's college and universities? If there were, at least we should thereby comply with the requirements of virtue and religion. The curricula of women's colleges would be subject to public interest just as the present ones are in accord with the particular capacities and preparations of the individual students. Those subjects suited to the capabilities of men alone should be eliminated, but the reason for this would certainly not be a desire to reduce woman's share in education. To those who do not satisfy the requirements we refuse admittance in military, police, and many other colleges. Similarly, if women are refused admission to certain colleges, it is simply on account of their unpreparedness for the professions for which these institutions educate their students.

Furthermore, we do not want to educate our women so that they may enter clerical or government service. First of all, we want to educate them because education is good for its own sake. Next, we must educate them that they may labor in a field that has long lain barren, and thus assist in redeeming the East from its centuried backwardness--a retardation caused in no small part by the paucity of educated persons. Then, education is necessary in order that they may reconstruct our homes and allow family relations to be built on healthier, saner bases; and finally, that they may participate in the great mission assigned to man. However, although Islam encourages female reformers in every age and place, it does not require woman to participate in man's actual mission.

More noteworthy still is the recognition that the importance and greatness of a woman's duty in building home and family, and consequently, the whole nation, demands our continuous concentration and our greatest effort. There have been for years interminable discussions among the learned, together with treatises in great number, concerning the problem of educating women and effecting their "Renaissance". But how will this be realized in actuality?

The poet, al-Rasāfi, composed the following poem, exhorting us to educate our women:

There is no place where moral character could  
be better developed than in the laps of women.  
A mother's lap is a school whose distinction is

the education of sons and daughters. The morals of a child can be no better than those of his mother. A qualified person would make a far better educator than a stupid one. After all, the plants that tenderly grow in the garden cannot be like those that grow wildly in the mountains.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now addressing umm-al-Mu'minīn, al-Rasāfi expresses his deep regret over the ignorance of the Muslim women who came after her:

O umm-al-Mu'minīn, shall we express to you  
our sorrow over the ignorance of Muslim women?  
Theirs is certainly such a great tragedy that even  
the waters of the Euphrates seem bitter to us.

\* \* \* \* \*

We regard a girl's ignorance as her protection,  
as if ignorance were a fortress! And we force  
her to stay at home and think that she is safe.  
The truth is that while our ancestors used to  
bury their daughters at birth, we are now bury-  
ing them before they die.

## Chapter VI

### ISLAM AND SOCIALISM

Whenever the Ash'arites suffered hunger through conquest or their families in Medina ran short of supplies, they pooled all their possessions... and redivided them equally... I am of them and they are of me...

A Hadith

Lord, Thôu hast given justice to the poor as against the rich; for all of them have exactly the same right to life.

Shawqi

1.

#### The Socialism of Alms

"In the opinion of the priesthood," writes Sheikh Khālid, "alms constitute a sufficient system for combating poverty. Under a religious government one hears so much exhortation to almsgiving that it is hard to tell whether one lives in a society or an orphanage. I wholeheartedly acclaim this splendid discovery of Wells when he said..."

But why should we quote Khālid's quotations from H.G. Wells? There is no need for this. Instead, let us deal directly with the relation of Islam to the so-called alms-socialism. Many people and many priests have misunderstood this relation. We shall quote here from our book, "al-Islām wa al-Awdā al-Iqtisādiyyah" [Islam and the Economic Situation].

"Many 'ulamas think that Islam provides no solution to the problem of the poor save alms--that through this means alone it seeks to alleviate and put an end to the suffering of the poorer classes. They argue that the alms which God has commanded to be taken away from the wealthy are sufficient to satisfy the needy. This thinking is narrow-minded

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and illogical. Alms can never be any more than something given gratuitously. The ways in which God has commanded alms to be disbursed point to this gratuitous nature of almsgiving.

"The role charity can play in the life of society cannot be basic. It is futile to make the life of a large part of the nation dependent upon the alms contributed by another part. A person who can work and support himself should not depend upon the charity of others.

"Otherwise, almsgiving would become a corrupting and degenerative duty that encourages laziness and unemployment. It cannot be doubted that this is not the intention of religion.

"Healthy men should be given work. Their well-earned wages constitute the first economic pillar in the construction of every healthy community. Charity then becomes secondary and would be resorted to only in cases of severe emergency, which is precisely where charity belongs.

"Providing work for all is the responsibility of the government. It should adopt those economic measures that help realize this noble objective. In order to provide constant employment for all the people and constrain idle persons to work, the government is indeed under the obligation to institute construction projects and adopt financial policies in accord with this end. This is a simple dictate of common sense; there is nothing in it contrary to Islam. Indeed, any other religion would encourage the adoption of such policies. Islam, in addition, prescribes financial mobilization along with military mobilization for the service of truth, virtue and faith. Military mobilization alone is not sufficient, especially in our age, when war has become a race in scientific discovery and production as well. A nation at war today should leave unused no ounce of energy in the whole country, for modern war is as much an agricultural, industrial, and commercial affair as a military one. It pools the productive forces of the nation and thus increases the general momentum of the social machine, which must operate continuously in time of war and peace alike.

"Such total mobilization would put an end to unemployment and social injustice. All workers would then be true "mujāhidin" [soldiers in a holy war]. Much of this was in the Prophet's mind when he said, 'For every arrow shot in

war, God rewards three persons: to wit, its fabricator, its carrier, and the warrior who shoots it.'

"In the light of these truths we may understand the intent of the Holy Koran: 'Verily God has purchased of the true believers their souls, and their substance, promising them the enjoyments of paradise.' Every wise government may promulgate such laws as bring prosperity to all classes of citizens."

All these facts lie at the basis of Islam's economic policy. Sheikh Khālid is no doubt aware of them and should have borne them in mind when he wrote on "The Socialism of Alms". Instead, he confused the false with the true and led his reader to the following conclusions:

1. That alms were forbidden things to the Prophet and his family, and hence to his whole nation.
2. That Islam is almost completely wrong in prescribing charity, since when it once did so, it was acting under the pressure of circumstances.

\* \* \* \* \*

Regarding the first point, Sheikh Khālid writes: "When his grandson al-Hassan reached for a date that was given as alms and put it in his mouth, the Prophet snatched it out of the child's mouth saying, 'Phew, Phew, that is not for Muhammad or for his folk, but for the canaille.' Were then Muhammad's folks an aristocratic class which abhorred humiliation for themselves and allowed it for the others? No! It is only a great classic example which Muhammad sought to provide for the larger community that he called 'his folk', namely, his nation."

Bearing in mind what we have just said regarding the role of charity in social reform, we must now declare that those who, deserving them, receive alms do not thereby commit any crime or sin. It is permitted those who deserve to take alms, but it was absolutely forbidden to the Prophet and his family--with good reason. It is not the aristocratic status, or otherwise, of the Prophet that is here in question, but the prestige of the Prophet as God's messenger.

God desired that His Prophet's message be absolutely free of any ulterior motive. Every prophet before Muhammad laid claim to this same purity of intention when his people inquired of him about his business. Noah told his

people: "...will ye not fear God? Verily I am a faithful messenger unto you; wherefore fear God, and obey me. I ask no reward from you for my preaching unto you; I expect my reward from no other than the Lord of all creatures."

In explanation of the Prophet's action, we may state, firstly, that if charity is one of the pillars of Islam, like the profession of divine unity and like prayer, how could the Prophet allow himself or his people to take advantage of its proceeds? Would not such an action have given rise to suspicion, not only of the Prophet, but of religion itself? How would it have accorded with God's emphatic insistence that His Prophet be perfect and that he discard every portion of his people's wealth? "Dost thou ask of them a reward for thy preaching?" asks the Koran; "but they are laden with debts." "Dost thou ask of them any maintenance for thy preaching? since the maintenance of thy Lord is better; for He is the most bounteous provider." "...Say, I ask not of you any reward for my preaching; it is your own, either to give or not: my reward is to be expected from God alone; and He is witness over all things."

Secondly, the Prophet is a leader of men. In relation to him, the attitude of the people should be one of followers and apprentices. As students, he is their master; as soldiers, he is their general; and as children, he is their father. Indeed, the moral significance of his position as God-related man, endowed with God's revelation, is greater than any of these. How then could such a person receive alms from a human hand superior to his own? How could he allow such alms to reach his household?

Thirdly, suppose the state had appropriated a sum of money for the help of invalids and other need citizens. Could the head-of-state accept a share of that money? And if he rejected it, would he necessarily be an aristocrat?

The Prophet's refusal to touch what was given in alms and his prohibition of this to any member of his household betray great wisdom. And it is not surprising that he tolerated alms for the others.

Fourthly, it has been forbidden the Prophet's relatives to indulge in anything that was permissible to the others. It is known that when his womenfolk asked for more earthly things, he gave them the choice of living ascetically with him or of returning to their people.

Fifthly, another characteristic of prophethood is that a prophet leaves no patrimony behind. Everything he possesses becomes public property upon his death. Obviously, this rule does not apply to the people at large. Similarly, the prohibition against receiving alms applies to the Prophet and not to the whole people.

Nor does our defense imply that we allow the capable and the wealthy to receive alms.

\* \* \* \* \*

Charity is a sacred duty. It purifies the heart, disciplines the passions, forms a basis for tolerance, and strengthens society. It is not simply a tax. The Holy Koran mentions these spiritual effects of charity before the material results: "Take alms of their substance, that thou mayest cleanse them and purify them thereby; and pray for them: for thy prayers shall be a security of mind unto them; and God both heareth and knoweth."

It is then self-evident that the institution of charity is not a rationalization of begging and unemployment, but a God-given security for childhood, old age, and disease. It is a message of mercy and assistance to those who stand in need.

In our age, no Islamic government has taken care to organize charity and control its sources and disbursements. It is still entirely private and personal, with only the pious recognizing it as a duty, and unfortunately there is not even the inclination on the part of either people or government to institutionalize it. But this should surprise no one, for the economic chaos reigning over the countries of Islam is unparalleled. In each of my publications I have shown that however much our rich men might give in charity, their wealth would not thereby be cleansed and purified, since the greatest part of it was amassed through iniquitous means. When the people are ignorant of the essence of charity, and when its proceeds are spent on the undeserving as well as the deserving, there is little wonder that people reject it and even attack it. We should sympathize with every campaign to combat the present means of its implementation; but if the campaign is meant to combat charity itself, then the matter is one of great seriousness.

In his discussion of charity and its dangers, Sheikh Sayyid Rajab writes:

Love, mercy, compassion, and sympathy are some of the high values upon which God has based and ordered His creation. For He is the merciful, the compassionate, from whom all mercy flows which moves the animate and the inanimate worlds, and makes of men brothers united and of the stars an orderly system.

Here is the source of religion's call to goodness and charity. Goodness and charity are the dictates of divine law, but they are also the basis of natural law. Even if the divine Koran had made no provision for them, we could confide in the nature of things alone. But reality speaks eloquently in support of divine law.

This is why goodness and charity have been one of the obligations in every religion and one of the laws of society in every state. This is why they form one of the cornerstones of Islam, without which it would never be complete.

It is the duty of the Islamic legislators to safeguard the institution of charity, which is so important in Islam. He should give it the preference due to it over all other duties and tasks, and should see that it brings to society the blessings for which it is intended.

Almsgiving is necessary for the purification of the soul. Every investigator in the Book of God and every person blessed by Him will be able to recognize the great meaning and value inherent in this commandment of God. It aims at the highest and greatest value, the realization of which is a self-purification from covetousness and parsimony, a removal of the people's want and poverty, and a general moral elevation of the whole nation to a level beyond dissension, revolution, and other social calamities. History recognizes no more obvious cause for these than exaggerated class distinctions.

Many of the earth-shaking events that divide people into factions and the world into two parts--the present division being that of East and West, Communist and Democrat--are caused by the maldistribution of wealth, and the resultant competition and monopolistic practices. In these, we may appreciate the great pertinence of the Koranic command, "Take alms of their substance, that

thou mayest cleanse them and purify them thereby." We also perceive the value of the Prophet's own advice to us: "Avoid injustice; for the unjust shall see darkness on the Day of Judgment. Avoid parsimony; for it has destroyed those who came before you, caused them to shed their own blood and to desecrate the holy." "Three vices," said the Prophet, "are utterly destructive to man: An unscrupulous desire, a strong parsimony, and the admiration of one's own opinion."

## 2.

## Bread Is Peace\*

This is the title of the chapter in which Sheikh Khālid criticized our disordered economic situation and analyzed its causes. This chapter is full of fine meanings, warm appeals, and valid arguments. It may be rightly considered one of the best treatments of the subject that has appeared among us. It is also the best chapter of the book, the one least open to criticism.

It would have been more appropriate if Sheikh Khālid had chosen for this splendid chapter a less materialistic title than "Bread Is Peace". A title suggesting the spiritual values to which the author is devoted would have been more appropriate. However, Sheikh Khālid was partially justified in his choice. The blame really belongs to Oriental capitalism, which is alone responsible for most of our present sufferings and for our extremist inclinations.

Everybody now knows that this capitalism is founded upon robbery and--what is even worse--that it spends all it steals on the satisfaction of base desires and the spreading of moral, social, and political chaos.

It is this accursed capitalism that impels us to such lengthy discussions of material reconstruction. As long as it stands, the need for providing the most basic essentials can never be overemphasized.

Because our material needs are so acute, our concern for them must take precedence over our spiritual needs.

\*It may be remarked that through a translator's error these words were reversed to read "Peace Is Bread" in No. 3 of this series.

Since capitalism robs us of our world, assumes the garb of religion in order to conceal its theft, and, in short, allows us to survive only as walking skeletons, we should not be alarmed at a loss of some spiritual values pending our deliverance from it.

Though I am a preacher of Islam, I am often compelled to discuss purely worldly matters pertaining to enslaved and exploited skeletons while they stand at the mercy of Satan's human agents.

## 3.

## Two Possible Courses of Material Reconstruction

Two alternative roads of recovery from our present oppression and darkness are possible, and are now open to our choice. They are: first, an absolute, but more or less irreligious socialism, as in Russia; second, an Islamic socialism based on the cardinal points of monotheism and brotherhood of all men. Under an Islamic socialism there can be neither pecuniary nor class discrimination among the people.

Irrespective of their language, race or color, individuals are all equal in Islam. No person may be preferred to another, no opportunity may be given to one unless it is given to the other, and nobody may work unless everyone else has the opportunity to do likewise. These and similar measures of human equality are the basis of every Islamic constitution.

These are the two courses. We cannot accept an absolute, irreligious socialism in order to deliver us from our misfortune, nor can we accept a neutral socialism that takes sides with neither monotheism nor polytheism. Islam, on the other hand, provides us with a system which, in addition to realizing equality and justice among the people, furnishes all that is necessary to safeguard faith. Moreover, it cannot be our intention to gain this world at the cost of the other. We must recover our rights through our own effort and in the true spirit of Islam. With God's help, we shall certainly succeed.

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Following are a few paragraphs from the preface to my book, "Islam between Its Enemies, Communism and Capitalism", which give further clarification to the above-mentioned statements.

"Islam is both a doctrine and a system. In Islam, system is always secondary and subservient to doctrine; it is necessarily a resultant of the virtues inherent in doctrine. Systems may vary with time and place; but their variation is one of means, while the end remains the same. Superficial scholars may think that the presence of certain principles necessarily binds every Islamic system to conservatism, liberalism, or socialism. That, however, is a mistake. The principle of private property, for example, is recognized by both the Islamic and the capitalist systems. The abolition of usury and interest is common to both Islam and communism. But neither point implies that Islam is either capitalistic or communistic. Its system is independent and original, deriving its principles from the nature of Islam alone; and it seeks to serve man and protect his striving towards the highest values. Regarding our present social situation, Islam has many criticisms and condemnations: First, Islam recognizes no property or gain that has been immorally acquired. Second, it forbids great rewards for insignificant services and does not tolerate trivial remuneration for hard work. Third, it does not allow unemployment, vagabondage, and chaos. It considers the government responsible for these evils.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Islamic socialism is first concerned with realizing the more basic principles that Islamic doctrine teaches. Only after these are assured will it devote its care to discover and establish the detailed economic regulations compatible with it. To this end Islam fully sanctions the use of legislative and executive power. Universal brotherhood, for instance, is a cardinal point of doctrine. The state is responsible for the realization of this brotherhood and the abolition of every economic circumstance that runs counter to it.

"Luxury and extravagance are social diseases; the state must legislate against them and uproot them. Self-sufficiency

and economy are absolutely necessary; hence the state must bring about material conditions that safeguard and promote them. Perhaps these requirements will force the state to extend its control in a manner similar to the Russians and Americans. But this is perfectly legitimate as long as its general purpose and motives are purely Islamic.

\* \* \* \* \*

"This is our opinion concerning the subsidiary legislations. The main object of importance is the constitution from which they spring and the spirit with which they are imbued. If England found her national interest demanded that the thief have his hand cut off and the adulterer be flogged and, in pursuance of this national interest, she amended her criminal law to such effect, she would not thereby become Islamic. Her professed religion would still remain Christianity. It might even be claimed that the amendment had been dictated by purely Christian considerations."

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#### 4.

#### The Advocates of Islamic Socialism

Since economic problems became more complex and their solution became more closely related to the interests of the whole nation, thinkers throughout the Muslim world began to follow a realistic line of thought consistent with a regard for the purity of religion. Their labors give an impression of common interests and concerns despite the time and distances separating them.

A month ago I received a number of treatises on various economic problems from Sheikh Mawdūdī, Chief of "al-Jama'ah al-Islāmiyah" [The Islamic Society] in Pakistan. Upon perusal I discovered, to my surprise, that their methods and spirit are identical with those of treatises written in Egypt.

So, too, our investigations led to the same conclusions that our brethren in al-Shām [Syria] had discovered. These brethren were able to introduce important reform programs--such as the redistribution of agricultural lands--within the framework of their new constitution. There, the principle

of private property has been modified so that the land belongs to whoever cultivates it, rather than to him who owns it. The government may now dispossess a landlord of lands that lie waste and sell them to whoever is prepared to cultivate them. "Al-Ahrām" newspaper has called their constitution "progressive". In truth, it constitutes a significant, though limited, gain for Islamic socialism, for the scope of Islam's social reform program is much wider than many people think.

We have given an exposition of Islamic socialist philosophy and have discussed various aspects of its great programs in several books published a few years ago: "Islam and the Economic Situation", "Islam and the Socialist Programs", "Islam between Its Enemies, Communism and Capitalism".

Sayed Kotb has also published a book, "Social Justice in Islam", which is a very scholarly and richly documented study of the same subject. Bahiyy al-Khawli wrote an excellent treatise entitled "Neither Communism nor Capitalism, but Islamism". The thought of Muslim scholars everywhere has met at the same point, for they all seek to deal with the crises of their countries on the basis of Islam. Instead of imitating East or West, they have remained true to their Islam and thus created an original solution.

## 5.

### Beasts, Not Rulers

The exhortations of fraternity and mercy which fill the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Prophet had a great influence in combating the tyrannous government that ruled the countries of Islam for many centuries. Every one of those governments lived in a perpetual state of war against its own people. The governor spoke only to dispossess, to rob, and to inflict injustice upon someone. The teachings of Islam were able to do no more than a Red Crescent assistance group at an earthquake or a war disaster.

The wars waged by these tyrants against the people have lasted up to the present day in many unfortunate lands. These were wars directed against Islam and its people. We have seen how one of the rulers abrogated the religious prohibitions and punishments outright, as if he were telling the Almighty:

"Thou hast given the Law, but I shall annul it!"

Some of these rulers regarded themselves as the lawful proprietors of lands belonging to their subjects. Indeed, there are woeful pages in our history full of such royal iniquities. One monarchy, in fact, went so far as to give its rulers divine names (for instance, "Owner of all Property") and regarded the people as mere slaves. No doubt that period of our history was a gloomy one; the government was utterly lacking in either religion or honor, and the country was a jungle where the rulers were tigers and wolves and the subjects were lambs and rabbits. What is still more amazing is that such a situation could occur in Islamic countries and that the authors of such crimes could survive for even a moment. Yet, however unfortunate it might seem, the truth is that those tyrants lived a long time and spread their oppressive chaos far and wide.

The obstacles now blocking the progress of Islamic socialism are only the consequence of service to false gods and of our shameful silence. How much happier would have been our lot if we had always observed the basic principles of our Islam!

Describing the princes of our past sultanates, al-Raṣāfi composed a poem from which we quote:

... They avoided every kind of toil and lived, as parasites, upon the labor of the people. All their glory and splendor issued from the same source, and every manifestation of it brought tears to the people's eyes. Theirs were the delicacies of the most refined table while their subjects could not afford a sawdust porridge. All the people worked solely that their dynasty might live well; and it seems as if all men were created to salute them as though they were gods.

The princes enjoy life's blisses, and we carry the heaviest burdens. When the enemy strikes, we, not they, must go out to meet him. Of anything they decide to do, the unpleasant part always falls to us. Whenever a princeling is born, the duty is ours to nurse and protect him.

We should accept all this were it not for their great stupidity, which, we may say, is their only mark of distinction from the most plebeian folk. If all men had to undergo a qualification test, our princes would be the

last to pass through it. Ours is a state where justice and all values have cause to shudder. On the princes' part, it is baseness and shame; on ours, it is ignorance and impotence. Under any socialist system, this would be impossible. Furthermore, under Islam, it is ungodliness and devil's work.

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In Islam, the ruler should be a benevolent, merciful father before being a powerful potentate. Compassion should always come sooner to his heart than severity. Such was the example of the Great Prophet, who said: "There is no believer for whom I am not responsible in this world and the next. The Prophet is more responsible for the believers than they are for themselves, more than their husbands, wives or mothers... Wherever a believer dies leaving any wealth, his relatives, whoever they may be, should inherit it; but if he dies leaving a debt unpaid or orphan children, then I am responsible for them."

'Ibād ibn-Sharr Ḥubayl related this anecdote about himself: "When a drought year hit me, I entered one of the farms of Medina, picked up a few wheat kernels and ate them. As I did so, the owner of the farm came, struck me, and took me to the Prophet of God and told him of my trespass. The Prophet reproved him, saying, "Wouldn't you teach the ignorant or feed the hungry?" The Prophet then commanded him to give me back my garb and a whole measure of wheat also."

\* \* \* \* \*

Islam never regarded the ruler as being any more than an employee. An employee receives his salary only if he fulfills his duty well; otherwise, he is discharged. It is really a reversal of the nature of things when the ruler becomes employer and the people are the ones to be employed or discharged. To rectify this situation is the first task of Islamic socialism.

## 6.

### Where Is It?

The reader may possibly ask whether Islamic socialism has been applied anywhere, and whether there is, at present, any living example of it to which he may turn. The answer is, unfortunately, "No! There is none". The principles of Islam have been crippled in Islamic countries for a long time. This is not a matter for which socialism can provide a cure, despite its excellent programs, since the problem is one of first adopting that socialism itself. It is not a reform in the status of property or of some public utility; it concerns our religious ethos itself.

The large-scale robbery of agricultural lands, the appropriation by an individual tyrant of all the oil resources of the country, the monopoly of all important trade on the part of a particular group, the exposition of a whole people to famine and cold in a land overflowing with wealth and the bounties of nature--all these and other such forms of decadence and robbery are not violations of Islamic socialist principles alone. Every one of them is a departure from the most elementary principles of humanity. The present disputes, furthermore, between people and rulers in the countries of Islam are not of the "questionable" kind, concerning which the Prophet said: "That which is permissible is perfectly clear; likewise is that which is forbidden. Between them stands the questionable. Whoever avoids the latter will save his soul and reputation."

The question, whether or not the permissible itself shall be permissible and the forbidden itself shall be forbidden, whether or not the self-deified gods are gods, is of a categorical kind.

The Islamic world will remain the jest of the Jews and the heathen until these problems are solved.

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What harm could be more pernicious than this which now befalls our Prophet and religion? What blasphemy could be more satanic than this whereby men of unclean hands present Islam to the world as if it were pure poison? The world's



idea of Islam and of the people of Islam is one we must feel ashamed of. The land Islam occupies on the earth is a wretched wilderness where flocks of miserable people labor endlessly under most inhuman conditions for the benefit of a few decadent aristocrats. Is this the fate of those whose religion is one of monotheism and justice? "Accursed be that which they have given unto themselves. God has condemned them to eternal fire."

Let us look at another part of the world where life is based on the denial of religion altogether and the affirmation of matter alone. Anfs 'Azar, our minister to Russia, wrote an article for "al-Misri" in which we read:

"Costs in Russia are really exorbitant, but only for the foreigner. They accord with the wages the Russian workmen receive... The common laborer receives a wage of 500 rubles in the city and 300 rubles in the country. He and his wife normally live on an income of 600 rubles per month. Supposing a family includes three working members--and nobody is unemployed who is of employment age--they would have an income of 1200 rubles, which will amply satisfy their living needs.

"What attracted my attention most is the Russian child welfare service. This service is excellent beyond measure. The mother obtains a leave of four months before and after each birth, with full pay. Public playgrounds are plentiful in every community. Children's medicines are given free, and public education is obligatory for seven years.

"When we asked His Excellency about the state of public health, he said, 'It is good. Medical knowledge and service is on a very high level.'

"What is most attractive in particular is the absence of care on the faces of the citizens. Hardly a Russian gives any thought to financial or family troubles.

"The family organization is very good. The law has granted full protection to the wife."

While reading this article, it occurred to me that the devil must have covenanted with his fellows among men to debase religion with all possible means and promote irreligion as though it were a social need. It seems as if they have associated faith inevitably, through their mutual help and cooperation, with hunger, want, fear, and persecution.

Indeed, what passes nowadays for religion is not religion

at all, nor are its defenders "men of religion" or its "guardians".

God and His Prophet have absolutely nothing to do with these impostors or with their deliberate lies.

As we have said before, Islam is the thesis of the oneness of God and justice among men. The true believers should rise without delay to protect their religion and purify the Orient of its idols of slavery, poverty, and irreligion.

## 7.

## Birth Promotion, Not Birth Control

We are in full agreement with Sheikh Khālid's strenuous attack against this economic stagnation which is sapping our national strength; we also approve most of his suggestions for remedying the situation. We wish Sheikh Khālid had advocated Islamic socialism, yet his position is preferable to that of those men who belong to religion in name only. However, Sheikh Khālid is not a pure "socialist".

We reject utterly, for instance, his proposal of birth control and its supposed conditioning by economic development and social reform. But we do not mean to say that birth control is forbidden by Islam--Imam abu-Hamīd wrote in "al-Aḥya" condoning it, and the responsible men of Islam have officially permitted it under certain reasonable conditions. What we deny is the national need for birth control.

It is a fact that, in Egypt, poverty is due not to overpopulation but to maldistribution of wealth. If every able-bodied man were given the opportunity to work, and if the national wealth were distributed only among those who do work, Egypt would have no poverty at all.

Egypt can support a population of forty million people if we put some desert areas under irrigation, open others for mining, exploit our broad seas, our rich Nile, and take advantage of our unique position in the world.

The causes of poverty in Egypt are artificial. We should work for their removal, rather than attempt to control our birth rate because we fear to face them. It is known that an increased birth rate is encouraged in both the communist and capitalist camps--in Russia as well as in America. Why then should we, of all people, follow a policy of self-reduction?

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Islam encourages and works for population increase by every means. "Marry and multiply yourselves," says the Koran, "for I shall be proud of you, among all peoples, on the Day of Judgment." For the purpose of increasing the population, the Prophet commanded that all women be married. He regarded woman's fertility as her most important quality, and child-bearing, her highest achievement. "A fertile ugly woman is better than a beautiful, but barren one."

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To increase our birth rate, thus following the advice of the Prophet, would save us from great psychological and social evils. The Islamic people are lazy. They are suffering the wholesale robbery of their wealth. Though nature has provided them with bounty and power, their indolence has paralyzed their ingenuity and put them at the rear of the human caravan. We see many a region admirably endowed by nature with all that is necessary for trade, industry, and agriculture, but populated by diseased and downtrodden men who live by larceny, begging, smuggling, and the like. We also see foreigners go to those same areas and transform them into rich and prosperous gardens. Hence, our poverty can be only a poverty of will and of mind. As long as the people are lazy, stagnant, and ignorant, which they now are, the Orient will indeed be too poor to support even half its present population. "No country is ever too small," says a true proverb; "only the minds of its people are so."

Islam undoubtedly condemns this iniquitous state of affairs. The Muslims do not spend all night and day praying or seeking the other world, nor are they commanded so to do. Indeed, I have examined their minds and hearts and found them as empty of Islam as their stomachs are void of food. Comparing the care Muslims and non-Muslims devote to religious matters, I have arrived at the following figures which I present that the reader may test them for his own purpose:

Among Muslims:

one per cent of the time is spent on religious acts  
fourteen per cent of the time is spent on worldly affairs

eighty-five per cent of the time is wasted on recreation,  
Among non-Muslims:  
one-half per cent of the time is spent on religious acts  
eighty per cent of the time is spent on worldly affairs  
nineteen and one-half per cent of the time is wasted  
on recreation

We may forget for the moment the question of the worth or unworth of religious acts among both groups. Let us concentrate upon the actual results of both forms of living.

Birth control, or the complete lack of it, will do nothing whatsoever to alter these facts. If, however, the spiritual and intellectual level of the people were raised, the very suggestion of birth control would become irrelevant.